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Alice & Zoroku
story & art by
TETSUYA IMAI

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Alice & Zoroku
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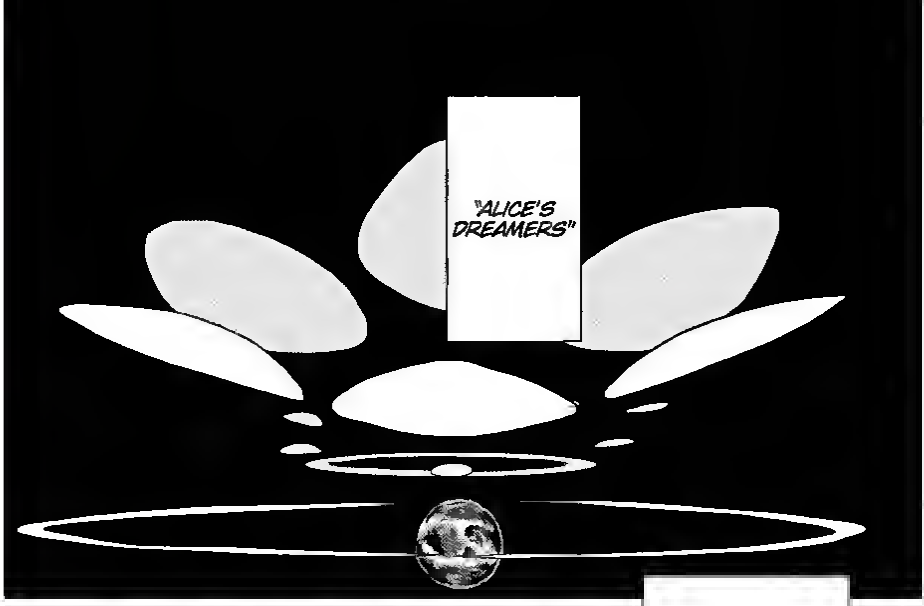
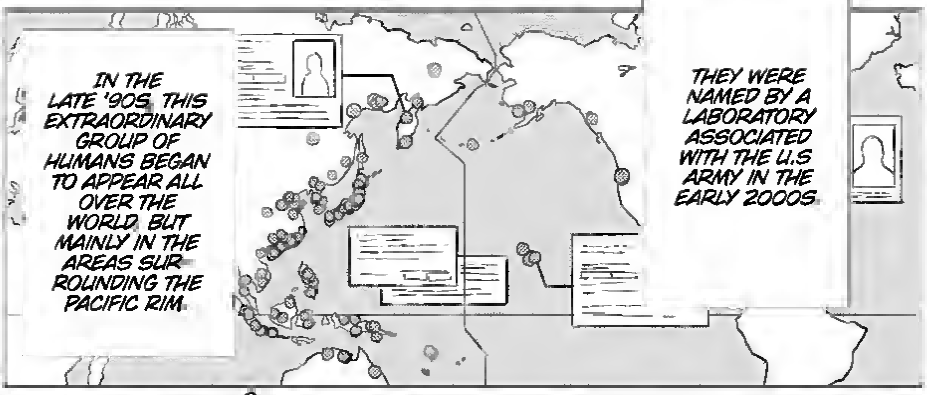
Tetsuya Imai

Chapter.5
The Jabberwocky Will Be Killed

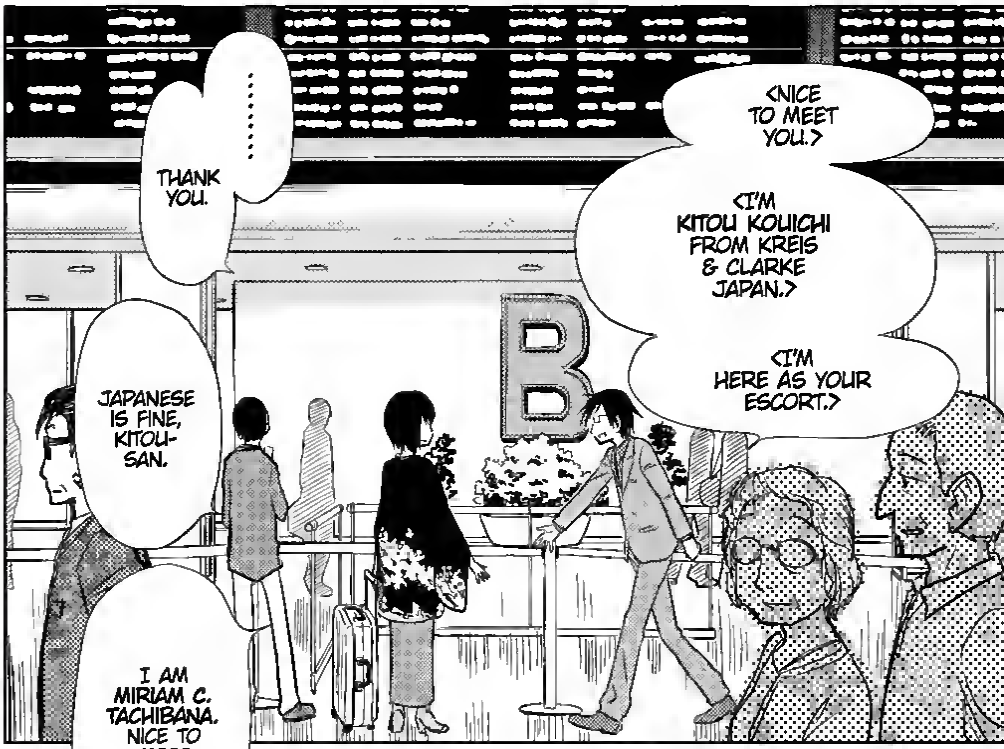

"ALICE'S DREAMERS"


IN THE LATE '90S, THIS EXTRAORDINARY GROUP OF HUMANS BEGAN TO APPEAR ALL OVER THE WORLD, BUT MAINLY IN THE AREAS SURROUNDING THE PACIFIC RIM.
THEY WERE NAMED BY A LABORATORY ASSOCIATED WITH THE U.S ARMY IN THE EARLY 2000S.

NOT MUCH IS KNOWN ABOUT THEM OR THEIR STRANGE ABILITIES, WHICH APPEARED SO SUDDENLY.

AT PRESENT, THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY ONE HUNDRED AND TEN VERIFIED DREAMERS WORLDWIDE.
FROOOOAR...

THREE YEARS PRIOR--2009.
<EXCUSE ME?>
<ARE YOU FORMER CAPTAIN MIRIAM C. TACHIBANA?>

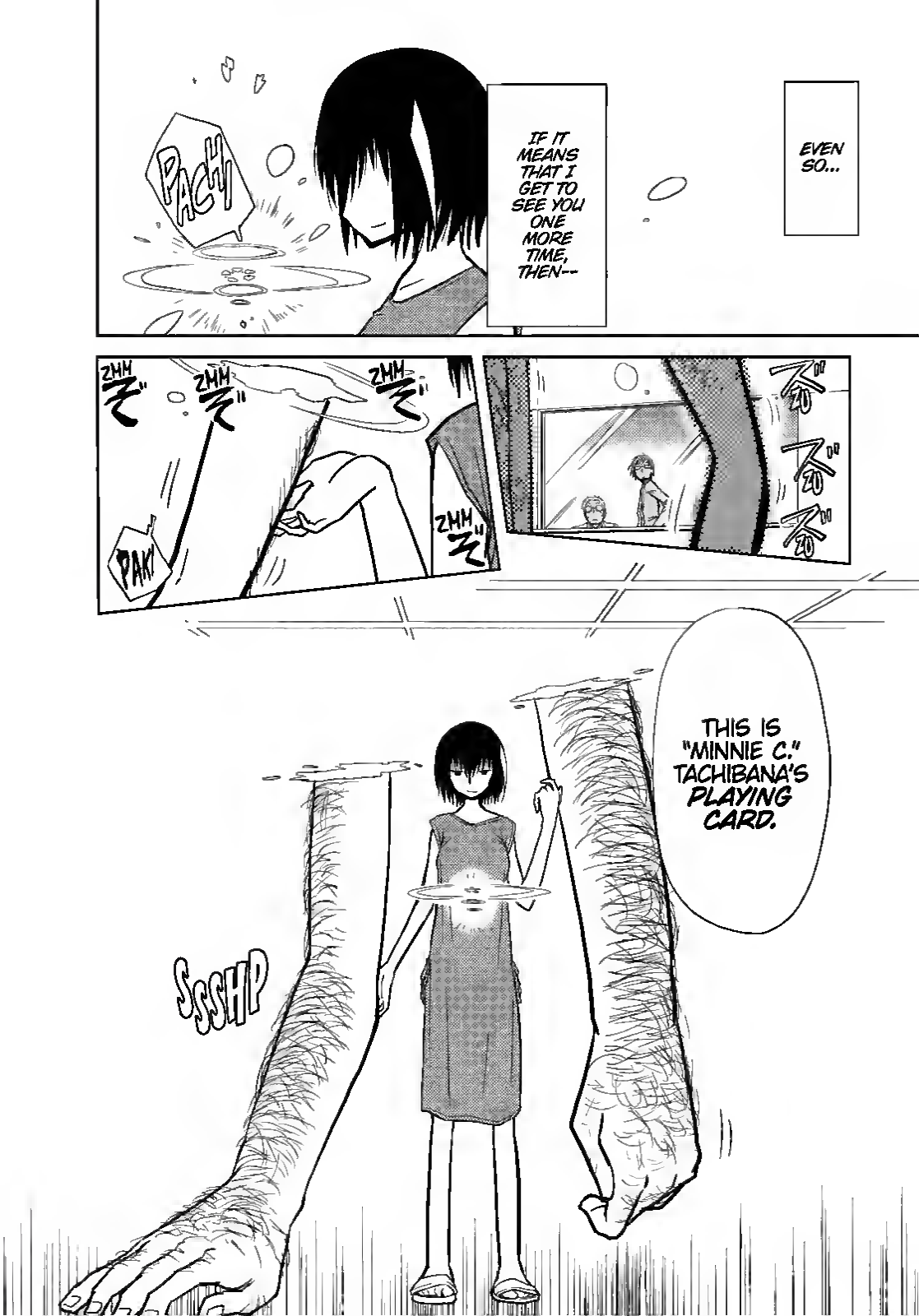

B
<NICE TO MEET YOU.>
<I'M KITOU KOUICHI FROM KREIS & CLARKE JAPAN.>
<I'M HERE AS YOUR ESCORT.>
THANK YOU.
.....
JAPANESE IS FINE, KITOU-SAN.
I AM MIRIAM C. TACHIBANA. NICE TO MEET YOU.

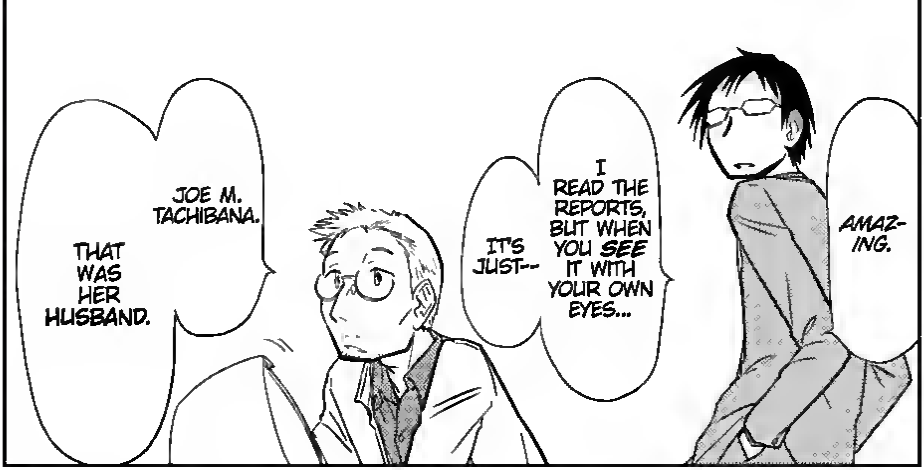
FROOOOO
Narita International Airport
Narita Airport Terminal 1

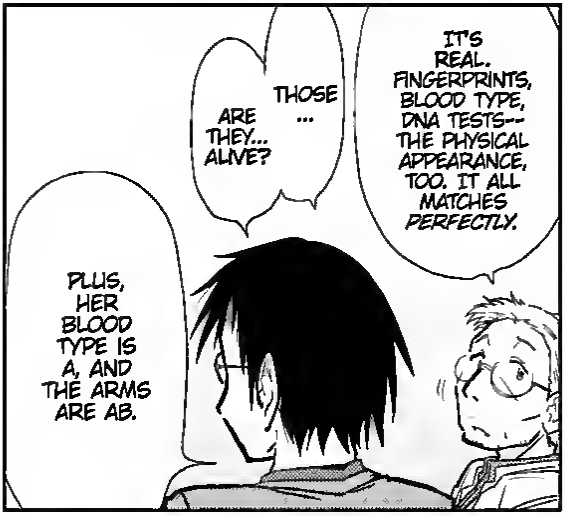
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
I RECOG-NIZED YOU RIGHT AWAY AT THE AIRPORT.
IT SUITS YOU. I WAS BRIEFED, YOU KNOW...
I WAS A LITTLE SUR-PRISED TO SEE YOU IN A KIMONO.
ブゥゥRRRRM
I'VE ONLY BEEN HERE ONCE BEFORE-- ON MY HONEY-MOON WITH MY HUSBAND.
NO.
YOU COME TO JAPAN OFTEN?
MY HUSBAND AND I ARE BOTH OF JAPANESE DESCENT, BUT...HE WAS A BIG FAN OF JAPANESE CULTURE.
THIS KIMONO WAS... SOMETHING I ASKED A FRIEND TO SEND RECENTLY.
IT MAKES ME FEEL CLOSER TO HIM.
.....

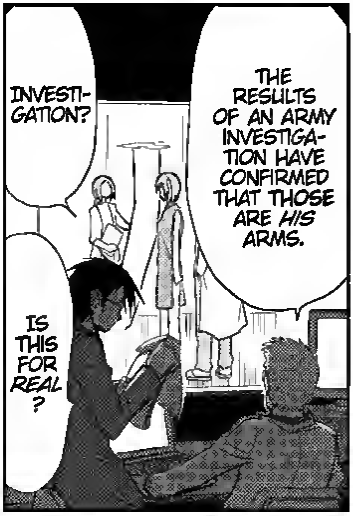
VR
RR
RN
YOU ALREADY KNOW EVERYTHING FROM MY PROFILE, DON'T YOU?
PLEASE DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I SEE.
OH...
WERE YOU EXPECTING ME TO BE MORE EMOTIONAL?
HEE HEE.
BUT TALKING TO YOU LIKE THIS-- YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I'D IMAGINED.
I'VE HEARD ABOUT IT.
WELL, UH... YES.
VRRRRM
I BECAME ONE OF ALICE'S DREAMERS IN THE FALL OF THAT SAME YEAR.
GRRRN
IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE MY HUSBAND WAS KILLED IN IRAQ.
.....
I USED MY POWERS TO--

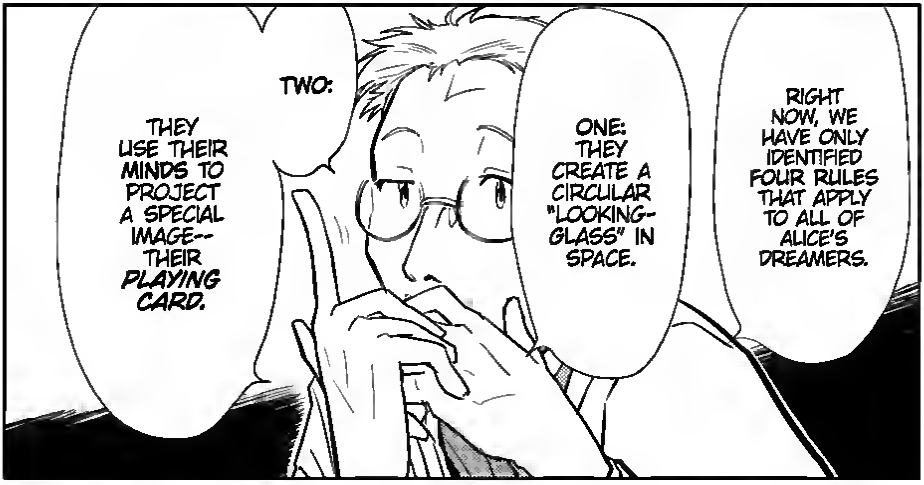
I WAS ORDERED TO COME TO THE LABORATORY AND SERVE AS... A SAMPLE. THAT'S WHY I'M HERE.
BUT... I'M CURIOUS, AS WELL. I WANT TO KNOW...
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MY BODY. WHERE DOES THE POWER COME FROM?
VRRRNN
I'M GLAD YOU'RE SO EASY TO TALK TO. I'M NOT ALWAYS COMFORTABLE WITH THIS KIND OF THING.
I WISH YOU THE BEST, TEST SUBJECT TACHIBANA-SAN.
IF YOU DON'T MIND— COULD YOU PLEASE CALL ME "MINNIE C."?
THAT'S HOW MY HUSBAND ALWAYS INTRODUCED ME TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY.
IF YOU PASTE A SMILE ON YOUR FACE, IT'S THE SAME AS HAVING NO EXPRESSION AT ALL.
K&C PHARMACEUTICALS JAPANESE DIVISION SHIZUOKA LABORATORY
I HARDLY FEEL ANYTHING.
THE WAY I AM NOW...


PACH
IF IT MEANS THAT I GET TO SEE YOU ONE MORE TIME, THEN--
EVEN SO...
ZHM
ZHM
ZHM
PAK
ZHM
THIS IS "MINNIE C." TACHIBANA'S PLAYING CARD.
SSSHP

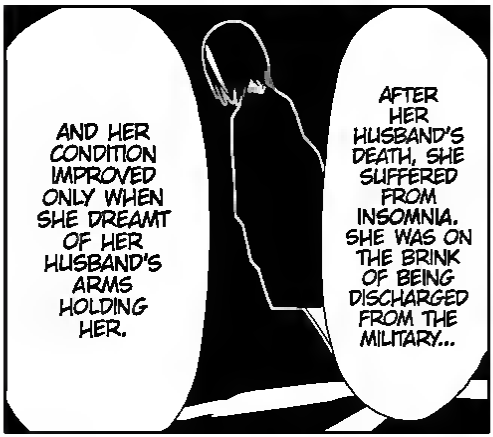

AMAZ-ING.
I READ THE REPORTS, BUT WHEN YOU SEE IT WITH YOUR OWN EYES...
IT'S JUST--
JOE M. TACHIBANA.
THAT WAS HER HUSBAND.

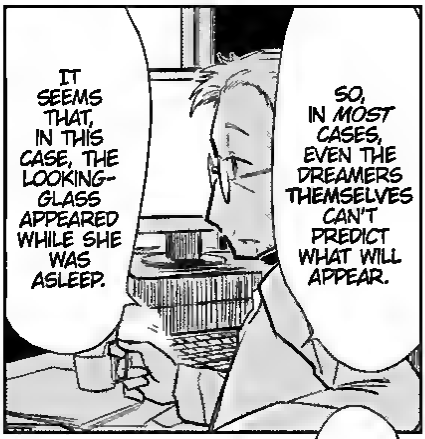

IT'S REAL. FINGERPRINTS, BLOOD TYPE, DNA TESTS-- THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE, TOO. IT ALL MATCHES PERFECTLY.
THOSE ... ARE THEY... ALIVE?
PLUS, HER BLOOD TYPE IS A, AND THE ARMS ARE AB.

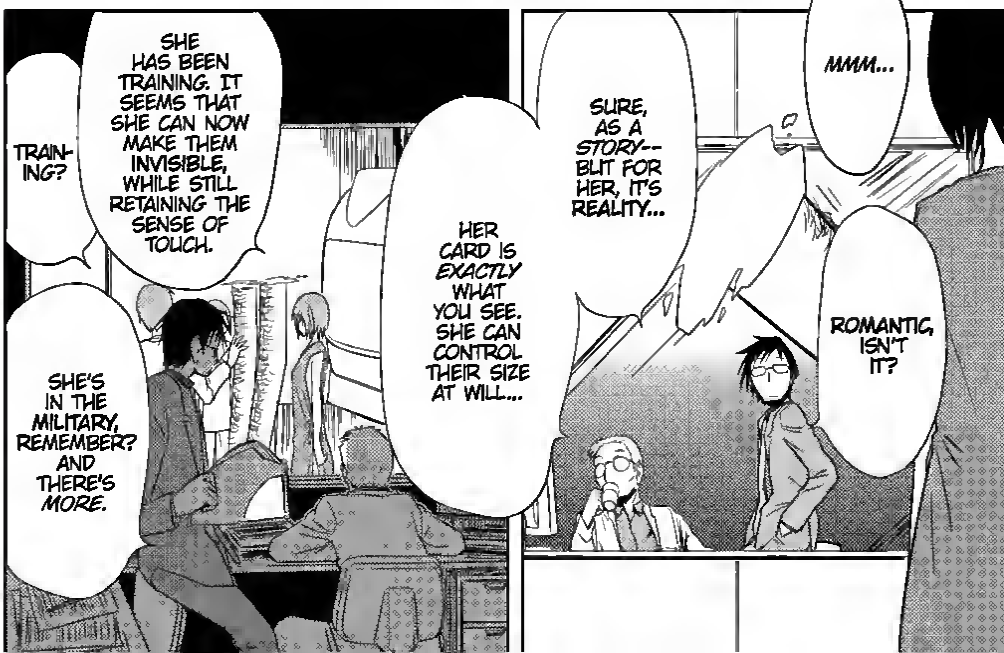

THE RESULTS OF AN ARMY INVESTIGA-TION HAVE CONFIRMED THAT THOSE ARE HIS ARMS.
INVESTI-GATION?
IS THIS FOR REAL?


RIGHT NOW, WE HAVE ONLY IDENTIFIED FOUR RULES THAT APPLY TO ALL OF ALICE'S DREAMERS.
ONE: THEY CREATE A CIRCULAR "LOOKING-GLASS" IN SPACE.
TWO:
THEY USE THEIR MINDS TO PROJECT A SPECIAL IMAGE-- THEIR PLAYING CARD.

THREE:
EACH DREAMER HAS ONLY ONE CARD.
IT SEEMS THAT ON THE FIRST DAY THAT THE LOOKING-GLASS APPEARS...
WHATEVER IMAGE IS STRONGEST IN THEIR MIND BECOMES THE CARD.


AFTER HER HUSBAND'S DEATH, SHE SUFFERED FROM INSOMNIA. SHE WAS ON THE BRINK OF BEING DISCHARGED FROM THE MILITARY...
AND HER CONDITION IMPROVED ONLY WHEN SHE DREAMT OF HER HUSBAND'S ARMS HOLDING HER.


SO, IN *MOST* CASES, EVEN THE DREAMERS THEMSELVES CAN'T PREDICT WHAT WILL APPEAR.
IT SEEMS THAT, IN THIS CASE, THE LOOKING-GLASS APPEARED WHILE SHE WAS ASLEEP.


MMM...
ROMANTIC, ISN'T IT?
SURE, AS A *STORY*-- BUT FOR HER, IT'S REALITY...
HER CARD IS *EXACTLY* WHAT YOU SEE. SHE CAN CONTROL THEIR SIZE AT WILL...
SHE HAS BEEN TRAINING. IT SEEMS THAT SHE CAN NOW MAKE THEM INVISIBLE, WHILE STILL RETAINING THE SENSE OF TOUCH.
TRAINING?
SHE'S IN THE MILITARY, REMEMBER? AND THERE'S *MORE*.

SHE CAN DO THINGS LIKE CHANGE THE SHAPE OF THE CARD ACCORDING TO WHAT SHE IMAGINES.
UNTIL NOW, WE HAD *THEORIZED* ABOUT WAYS THAT THE CARDS MIGHT BE ABLE TO DEFY THE LAWS OF PHYSICS...
HOWEVER, IT'S *EXTREMELY* RARE TO FIND A SAMPLE WITH THIS LEVEL OF CONTROL.
IT MIGHT BE BECAUSE OF THE STRENGTH OF HER DEDICATION TO HER CARD, HER EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT.
UNFORTUNATELY, AS THE THIRD RULE STATES, NO MATTER *HOW* HARD SHE TRIES, NOTHING MORE THAN THE ARMS WILL APPEAR.
IN ANY EVENT, SHE IS *QUITE* A RARE CASE.
IT'S EXCEPTIONALLY UNUSUAL TO HAVE A LIVING BEING AS THE PLAYING CARD.
WE MAY GAIN SOME VALUABLE INSIGHTS FROM THIS ONE.
.....

SO...
WHAT'S THE FOURTH RULE?
HMM? OH, YES.
THE TRUTH IS--WE DON'T KNOW MUCH BEYOND WHAT I'VE JUST TOLD YOU.
IT'S LIKE AN ANIME OR SOME-THING.

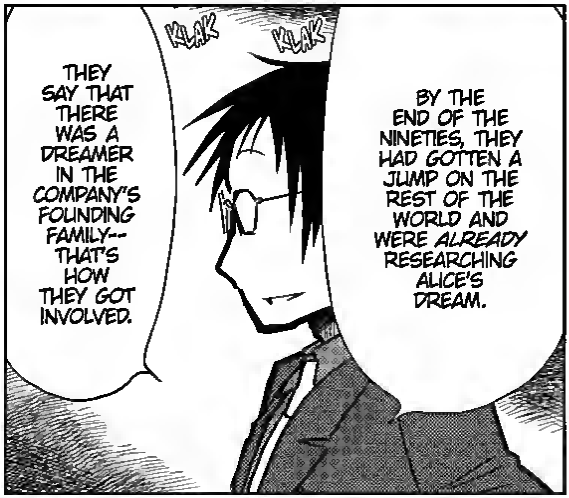
チチチ
CHIRP CHIRP... CHIRP...
TWEET チュン TWEET
CHATTER
NOM NOM NOM
NOM NOM
MNCH MNCH
BUZZ
BUZZ BUZZ
CHATTER CHATTER
THERE YOU ARE!
MAY I SIT HERE?

PLEASE.
SORRY TO BE DRESSED LIKE THIS.
NO, NO.
BUSTLE
BUSTLE
BUSTLE
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE PLACE? I MEAN, THE FOOD'S THE ONLY THING THAT'S GOOD AROUND HERE.
SCRAPE
HMM ...
WELL, THE CAFETERIA SURPRISED ME.
IT'S ACTUALLY QUITE CHARMING.
THIS IS THE MOST HISTORIC BUILDING IN THE COMPLEX.
BY THE WAY...HOW ARE YOU FEELING?
I'M GLAD.
YOU'VE BEEN EXAMINED ALL DAY, EVERY DAY SINCE YOU LANDED. I IMAGINE IT'S BEEN DIFFICULT.
NO. NOT REALLY.
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
SMILE
HE LIKED PHYSICALS, TOO.
HE SAID IT WAS KIND OF LIKE GOING TO THE AMUSEMENT PARK.

EVEN HE DIDN'T ENJOY THE STOMACH CAMERA, THOUGH.
YESTERDAY WAS AWFUL.
HA HA!
I DON'T LIKE THAT ONE, EITHER.
YOU REALLY THINK OF YOUR HUSBAND ALL THE TIME, DON'T YOU?
YES...
I KNOW IT'S A BIT STRANGE, BUT I DO.
.....
WE'VE FINISHED GATHERING THE BASIC DATA TODAY.
THIS AFTERNOON, THERE'S SOMETHING NEW I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU.
AFTER YOU'RE DONE EATING, CAN YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THIS? I'LL JUST NEED YOUR SIGNATURE HERE.
PI-I-NG♪
...
IT'S A CONTRACT, YOU KNOW.
THE ONE THAT SAYS YOU'LL KEEP ALL THE SECRETS SECRET.

ORIGINALLY, THIS FACILITY BELONGED TO AN OLD JAPANESE PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANY.
I GUESS DURING THE WAR THEY WERE CONTRACTED BY THE MILITARY TO DO SOME RESEARCH... COUNTING FROM BACK THEN, IT'S BEEN AROUND MORE THAN A HUNDRED YEARS.
THE BUILDINGS ARE NEW, THOUGH.
KLAK
KLAK
KLAK

DIDN'T JAPAN INITIALLY HAVE THE MOST?
THE MOST APPEARANCES OF ALICE'S DREAMERS?
KLAK
KLAK

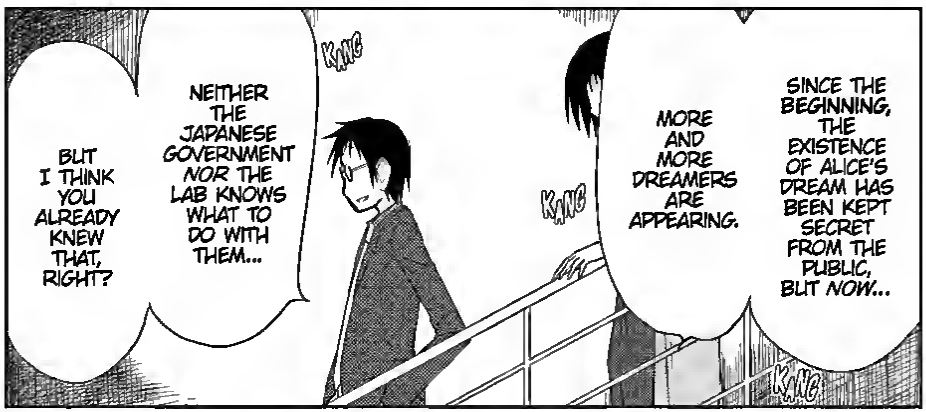

BY THE END OF THE NINETIES, THEY HAD GOTTEN A JUMP ON THE REST OF THE WORLD AND WERE ALREADY RESEARCHING ALICE'S DREAM.
THEY SAY THAT THERE WAS A DREAMER IN THE COMPANY'S FOUNDING FAMILY--THAT'S HOW THEY GOT INVOLVED.
KLAK
KLAK

PLEASE.
SLIDE
CLACK

GA-CHA
BIP BIP ♪

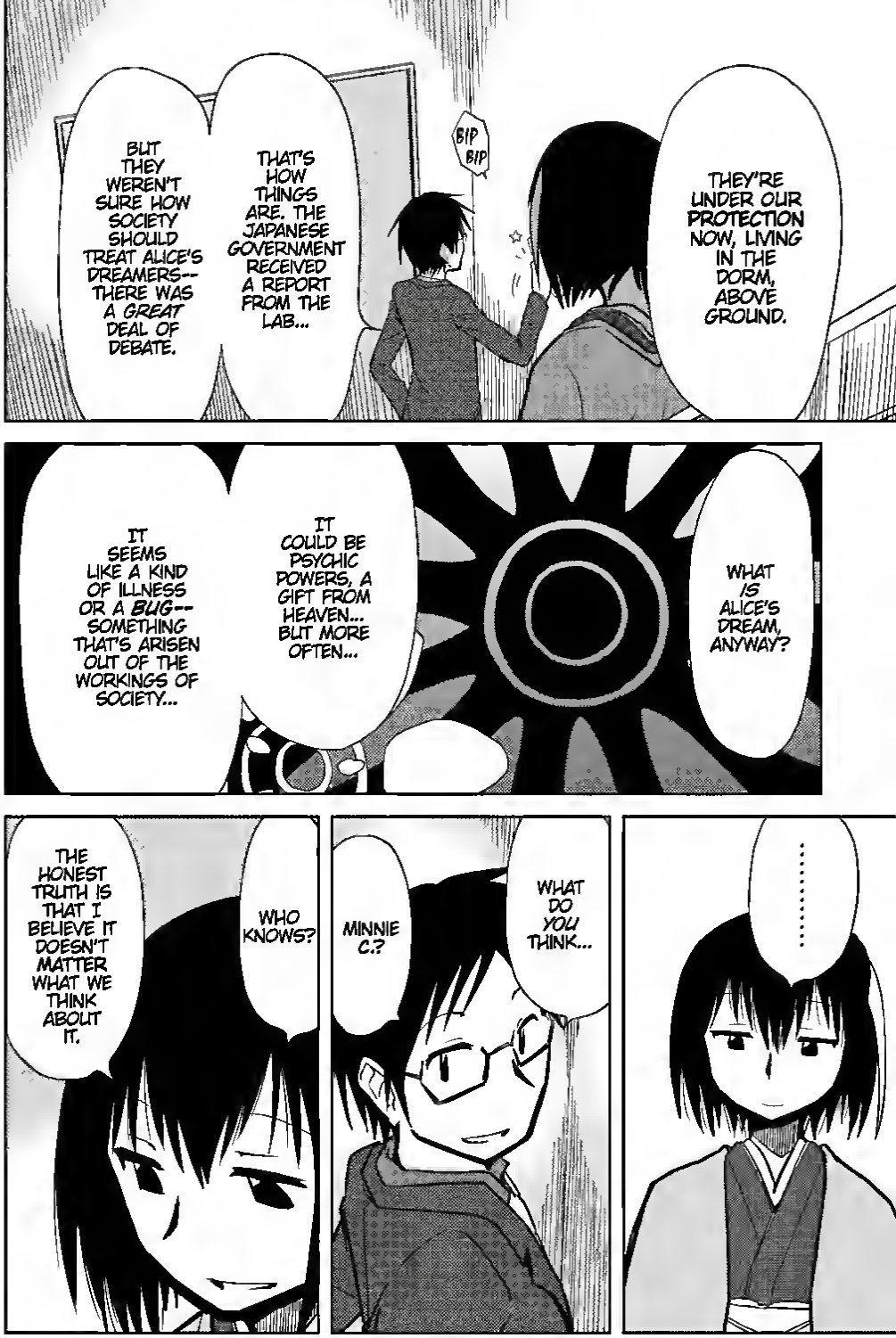
THAT'S RIGHT.
WE'RE NOT SURE WHY, BUT FOR SOME REASON, MOST SHOW UP IN THE EASTERN HEMISPHERE.
KLACK
KLACK

B2
KANG
KANG
KANG
.....


KANG
KANG
KANG
SINCE THE BEGINNING, THE EXISTENCE OF ALICE'S DREAM HAS BEEN KEPT SECRET FROM THE PUBLIC, BUT NOW...
MORE AND MORE DREAMERS ARE APPEARING.
NEITHER THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT NOR THE LAB KNOWS WHAT TO DO WITH THEM...
BUT I THINK YOU ALREADY KNEW THAT, RIGHT?

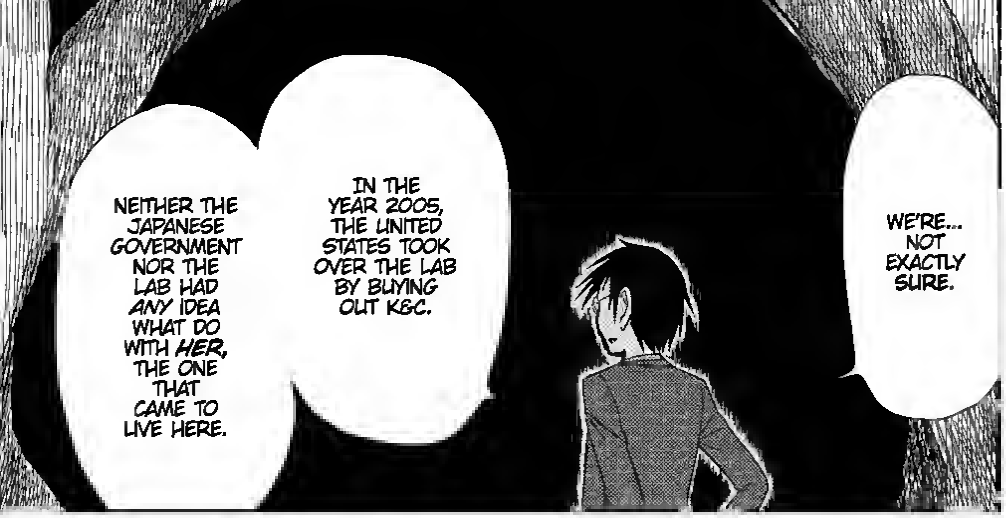
BECAUSE AMONG THE DREAM-ERS...
THERE ARE THOSE WHO CANNOT CONTROL THEIR CARD, WHO LOSE THEIR LIVES...
OR WHO HURT OTHER PEOPLE. WELL... IT'S NOT A SMALL NUMBER.
.....
YES.

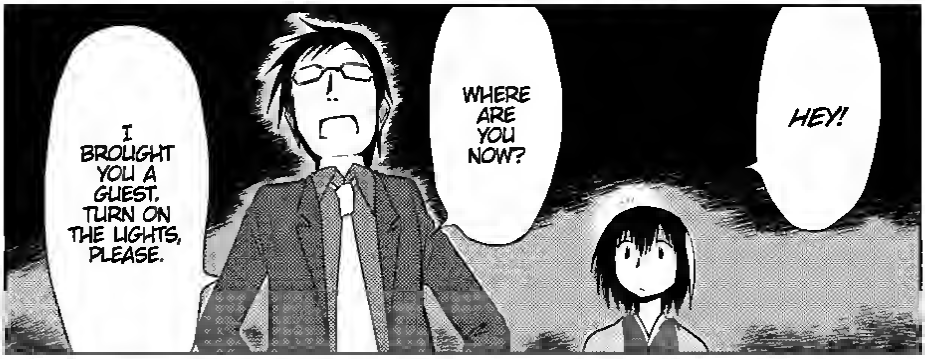
IS A YOUNG GIRL WHO WAS FOUND ALMOST SUFFOCATED TO DEATH, BURIED IN A LARGE AMOUNT OF FLOUR.
ONE OF ALICE'S DREAMERS THAT WE'VE TAKEN UNDER OUR WING...
KNG
KNG
ON THE OTHER HAND, THERE ARE INSTANCES WHERE THE LOOKING-GLASS HAS APPEARED, BUT A CARD COULD NOT BE VERIFIED.
IN *THAT* SENSE, MINNIE C., YOU ARE A HAPPY EXAMPLE.
KNG
KNG
SHE ENDED UP WITH BRAIN DAMAGE AND STILL HASN'T REGAINED CONSCIOUS-NESS.
IT SEEMS HER HOBBY WAS BAKING.
KNG
KNG
THERE'S *ANOTHER* CASE IN WHICH TWIN SISTERS SIMUL-TANEOUSLY BECAME ALICE'S DREAMERS.
BUT BECAUSE OF THE CARDS THAT THEY EACH CONJURED...
KNG
KNG
THEY ENDED UP *KILLING* FOUR PEOPLE, INCLUDING THEIR OWN ***FATHER.***


THEY'RE UNDER OUR PROTECTION NOW, LIVING IN THE DORM, ABOVE GROUND.
BIP BIP
THAT'S HOW THINGS ARE. THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT RECEIVED A REPORT FROM THE LAB...
BUT THEY WEREN'T SURE HOW SOCIETY SHOULD TREAT ALICE'S DREAMERS-- THERE WAS A GREAT DEAL OF DEBATE.
WHAT IS ALICE'S DREAM, ANYWAY?
IT COULD BE PSYCHIC POWERS, A GIFT FROM HEAVEN... BUT MORE OFTEN...
IT SEEMS LIKE A KIND OF ILLNESS OR A BUG-- SOMETHING THAT'S ARISEN OUT OF THE WORKINGS OF SOCIETY...
.....
WHAT DO YOU THINK...
MINNIE C.?
WHO KNOWS?
THE HONEST TRUTH IS THAT I BELIEVE IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT WE THINK ABOUT IT.

WHATEVER IT TRULY IS, IT'S ONLY HUMAN TO USE IT IN WHATEVER WAY WE CAN.
THAT'S WHY I'M HERE, AS A GUINEA PIG.
EVEN VIRUSES CAN SERVE A PURPOSE-- KILLING HARMFUL BACTERIA OR CANCEROUS CELLS...
SOMEDAY, HUMANITY WILL UNLOCK THE SECRETS OF ALICE'S DREAM.
THEN, MAYBE ANYTHING YOU WISH FOR COULD COME TRUE.
YOU DO KNOW, DON'T YOU? THE ONLY THING I'M INTERESTED IN IS WHAT COMES AFTER THIS WORLD.
I'D DO ANYTHING TO GET HIM BACK. I'D MAKE A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL--
HEH HEH HEH...
I LIKE THAT.
I'M NOT SO SURE ABOUT THE WAY YOU EXPRESS IT, BUT WE FEEL THE SAME. AFTER ALL, WE ARE RESEARCHERS.
THE TRUTH IS...
WE'VE ALREADY GOT LEADS ON THAT DEVIL. WHAT IF THAT WAS TRUE-- WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

PLEASE WATCH YOUR STEP, OKAY?
KLNK
A CAVE ...?
TEN YEARS AGO, ONE SECTION OF THIS UNDER-GROUND AREA SUDDENLY TURNED INTO ANOTHER WORLD.
THE SPACE WARPED, CHANGED... AND AN IMPOSSIBLY LARGE UNDER-GROUND AREA APPEARED.
OH, THAT'S A DRONE WE FLY TO CHECK ON THE STATUS OF THE INTERIOR.
WHATEVER SHE DOESN'T LIKE GETS DESTROYED APPARENTLY.
HUMANS ARE USUALLY SAFE, BUT...
"SHE"...?
DOES THIS HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH ALICE'S DREAM?


WE'RE... NOT EXACTLY SURE.
IN THE YEAR 2005, THE UNITED STATES TOOK OVER THE LAB BY BUYING OUT K&C.
NEITHER THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT NOR THE LAB HAD ANY IDEA WHAT DO WITH HER, THE ONE THAT CAME TO LIVE HERE.


HEY!
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
I BROUGHT YOU A GUEST. TURN ON THE LIGHTS, PLEASE.

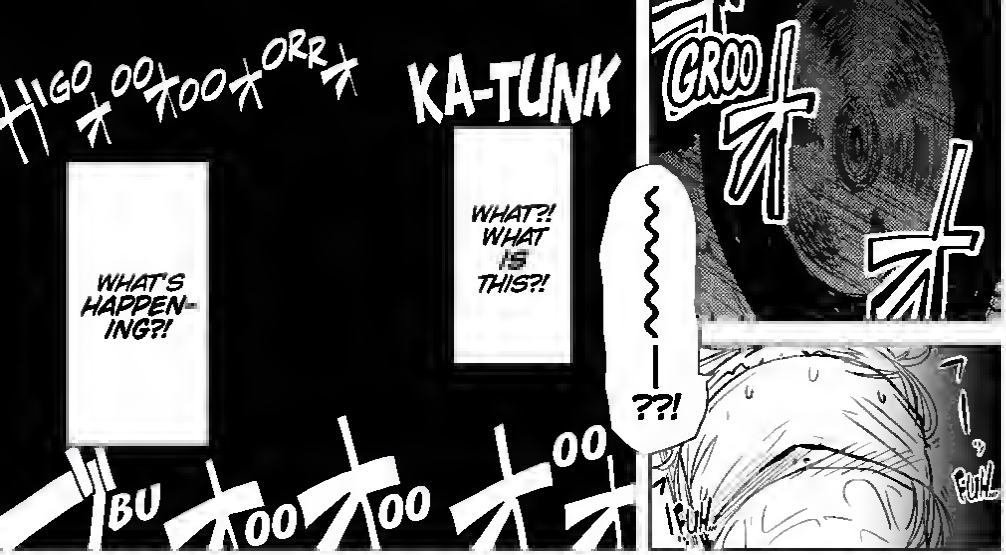
PWAA
!?
MINNIE C...
I NEED YOUR DATA TO UNLOCK HER SECRETS
.....!

.....
IT'S ALL ABOUT THE DREAMS OF THE RED QUEEN.
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS AND WHAT ALICE FOUND THERE?
ZZZ
ZZZ
ZZZ
IT'S ALL THE CARDS THAT SHE CREATES FROM THE LOOKING-GLASS--AN INFINITE NUMBER OF THEM.
ANYWAY, THIS WHOLE SCENE IS...
IN THE BEGINNING, THAT'S WHAT WE CALLED HER, BUT... SHE'S GIRLISH.
HER WHOLE EXISTENCE CHALLENGES THE RULES OF ALICE'S DREAM.
SHE'S NOT BOUND BY ANYTHING. EVERYTHING SHE DESIRES BECOMES A REALITY IN HER "WONDERLAND."
WE CALL HER...
THE "RED QUEEN."

WE CALL HER...
THE "RED QUEEN."

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT *THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS AND WHAT ALICE FOUND THERE?*
IT'S ALL ABOUT THE DREAMS OF THE RED QUEEN.
.....
IN THE BEGINNING, THAT'S WHAT WE CALLED HER, BUT... SHE'S *GIRLISH.*
ANYWAY, THIS WHOLE SCENE IS...
IT'S ALL THE ***CARDS*** THAT SHE CREATES FROM THE LOOKING-GLASS--AN *INFINITE* NUMBER OF THEM.
SHE'S NOT BOUND BY *ANYTHING.* EVERYTHING SHE DESIRES BECOMES A REALITY IN HER "WONDERLAND."
HER WHOLE ***EXISTENCE*** CHALLENGES THE RULES OF ALICE'S DREAM.

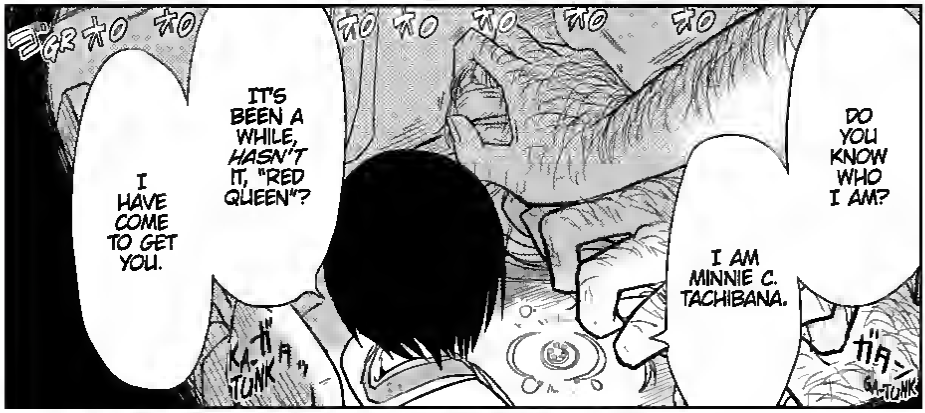
"TO PUT IT SIMPLY, SHE'S A MONSTER."
NNGH.
NNGH?!
OOF.
?!
OH? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
"RED QUEEN"?


HIGOOOOOORRR
KA-TUNK
WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
WHAT?! WHAT IS THIS?!
BUOOOOOOOO
GROOO
??!
FUH..
FUH!

WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY... THAT DOSE WOULD IMMOBILIZE AN ADULT FOR HALF A DAY, YOU KNOW.
HOW MUCH OF A MONSTER ARE YOU, ANYWAY?
MN !!
NGH ?!
VROOOOOM
MAYBE... YOU SUBCONSCIOUSLY BROKE DOWN THE DRUG?

IF YOU MOVE OR USE YOUR POWER, I WILL KILL YOU.
PLEASE, DO NOT MOVE.
KIIIIIIIN
?!!
GRIP
IT SOUNDS FAMILIAR.
WHO'S THIS... THIS VOICE...?
PACHI

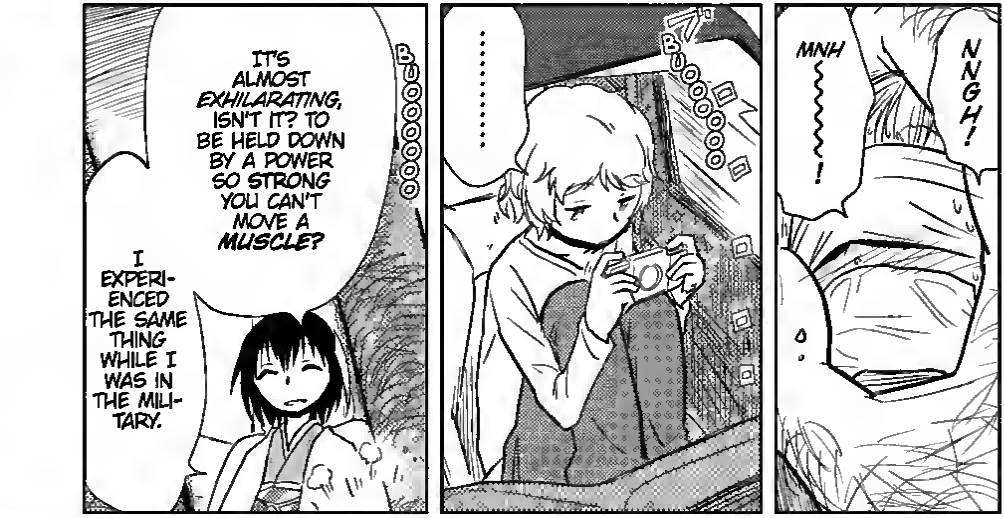
FROOOO
I'M SCARED.
?!
THIS POWER IS TOO MUCH. I CAN'T MOVE A MUSCLE.
WHAT'S THIS? WHAT'S GOING ON?
BUUU
BUOOOO


I HAVE COME TO GET YOU.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT, "RED QUEEN"?
DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
I AM MINNIE C. TACHIBANA.
KA-TUNK
GA-TONK

LET'S GO HOME TO "WONDER-LAND" TOGE-THER.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. WE'LL BE THERE IN NO TIME-- AS LONG AS YOU STAY QUIET.
IT'S NO USE.

!!
NGH!
NNGH!
GAS-SH-TUNK
KA-TUNK
KA-TUNK
GROOOOOO

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN LEFT ALONE-- NOT EVEN TO GO TO THE BATHROOM.
I HAD CLEO SKETCH THE LAYOUT OF THE ROOM FOR ME. YOU WEREN'T PAYING ATTENTION, SO IT WAS VERY EASY.


NNGH!
MNH
!
BOOOOOOO
.....
BOOOOOOO
IT'S ALMOST EXHILARATING, ISN'T IT? TO BE HELD DOWN BY A POWER SO STRONG YOU CAN'T MOVE A MUSCLE?
I EXPERIENCED THE SAME THING WHILE I WAS IN THE MILITARY.

LET ME EXPLAIN YOUR CURRENT SITUATION.
RIGHT NOW YOU ARE IN A CAR TRAVELING AT A HUNDRED KILOMETERS AN HOUR ON A ROAD YOU DO NOT KNOW.
IF YOU ARE THROWN OUT IT IS CERTAIN THAT YOU WILL DIE.
IF I PUSH WITH EVEN THE SLIGHTEST AMOUNT OF FORCE... YOUR NECK WILL BREAK AND YOU WILL DIE.
GR

DO YOU UNDER-STAND?
CAN YOU IMAGINE THAT?
IF YOU RESIST OR DISOBEY ME, YOU WILL DIE.
VRR-ROOOOM
GA-TUNK
CRK
GOOO
I'M SCARED.
I DON'T UNDER-STAND. WHAT IS THIS?
I CAN'T MOVE AT ALL. I CAN BARELY TELL WHAT MY BODY'S DOING.
I'M SCARED. THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE. I'LL DIE IF I MOVE? NO. IMPOSSIBLE.
ROOOM
KLNK

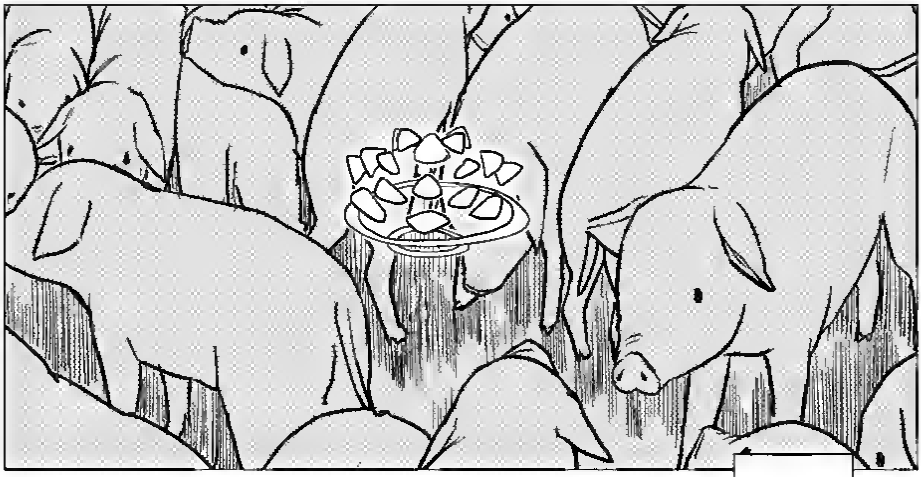
PACHI
MNGH!
KA-TUNK
I'M SCARED.
NNGH, NGH!
KNK
SCARED.
!!!
KRRRK
!!!!!!
!!!
VVVOO
FUU
REALLY. I AM SO VERY DISAP-POINTED IN YOU.
FFT!
NGH NNGH
NGH NGH NGH!
GRRR
RNNN
NNNN
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN YOU COULD CONTROL EVEN THE LAWS OF PHYSICS...
BUT AS SOON AS YOU CAME OUT INTO THE OUTSIDE WORLD... WELL, YOU REALLY ARE JUST A CHILD, AREN'T YOU?

THAT IS WHY I WAS AGAINST IT.
I WAS AGAINST HAVING YOU PLAY AT BEING HUMAN.
YOU RECEIVED A BODY, FIVE SENSES, EMOTIONS-- EVEN THE PRIVILEGE OF SEEING THE OUTSIDE WORLD...
IT'S BECAUSE OF ALL THIS THAT IT'S SO VERY EASY TO IMMOBILIZE YOU NOW.
MFF——!
MGH~~~!
HURTS...!
SCARED!
IT'S NO GOOD. I'M SCARED. I CAN'T THINK OF ANY-THING.
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS SHE SAYING?
IS SOME-THING THE MATTER?
MAYBE... YOU DON'T REMEM-BER?
OR IS IT THAT YOU LOST THE MEMORIES ON PUR-POSE?
FNNGH...!
GRRRNN
WELL, THAT'S FINE. I WILL TELL YOU.
UNGH!

YOU WERE NEVER HUMAN IN THE FIRST PLACE.
THERE'S NO REASON YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO GO AND LIVE IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
THIRTEEN YEARS AGO... WHEN YOU SUDDENLY APPEARED IN THE BASEMENT OF THE LAB...
YOU COULD HARDLY HAVE EVEN BEEN CALLED LIVING.

HUH?
WHAT ...?
YOU READ THE THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS OF THE LIVING BEINGS AROUND YOU.
BUT YOU WERE JUST A PHENOMENON THAT TURNED THOSE THINGS INTO REALITY.
YOUR APPEARANCE, YOUR FEELINGS, EVEN THE WORDS YOU LEARNED...
THEY ARE ALL CARDS THAT WERE COPIED FROM HUMANS BY A LOOKING-GLASS WITH NO OWNER.
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN?

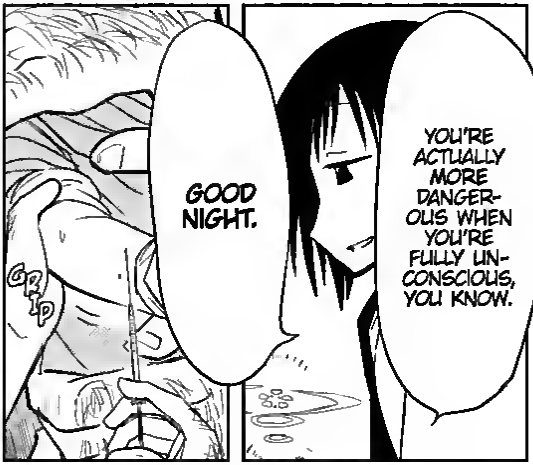
"I REMEMBER THE INSTANT THAT I SUDDENLY BECAME ME."

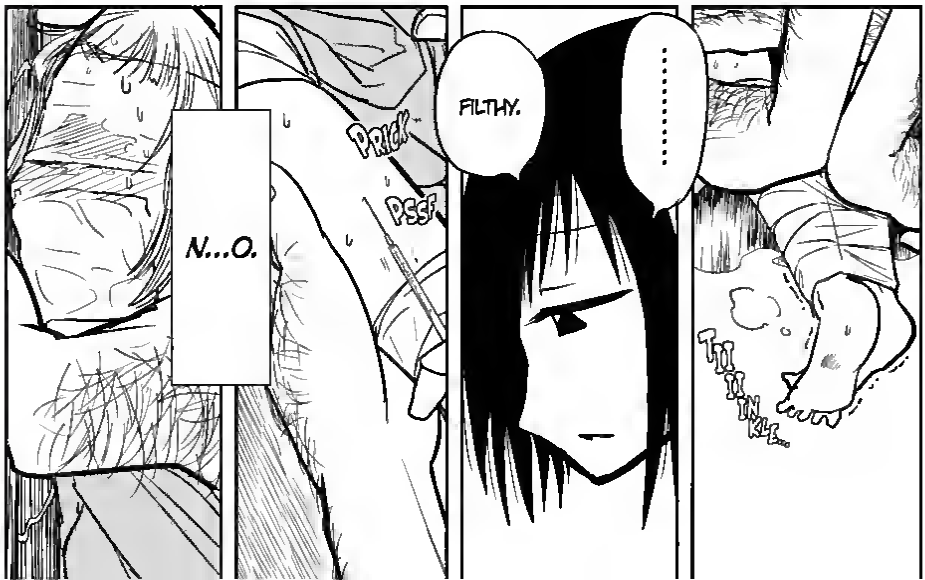


THAT'S NOT TRUE.
I MEAN, I'M SANA AND...
I'M HERE AND...
THAT IS WHY YOU SHOULD NOT LEAVE THE LAB.
THERE'S NO PLACE FOR YOU IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
WE ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO REALLY KNOW YOU. WE ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN PROTECT YOU.

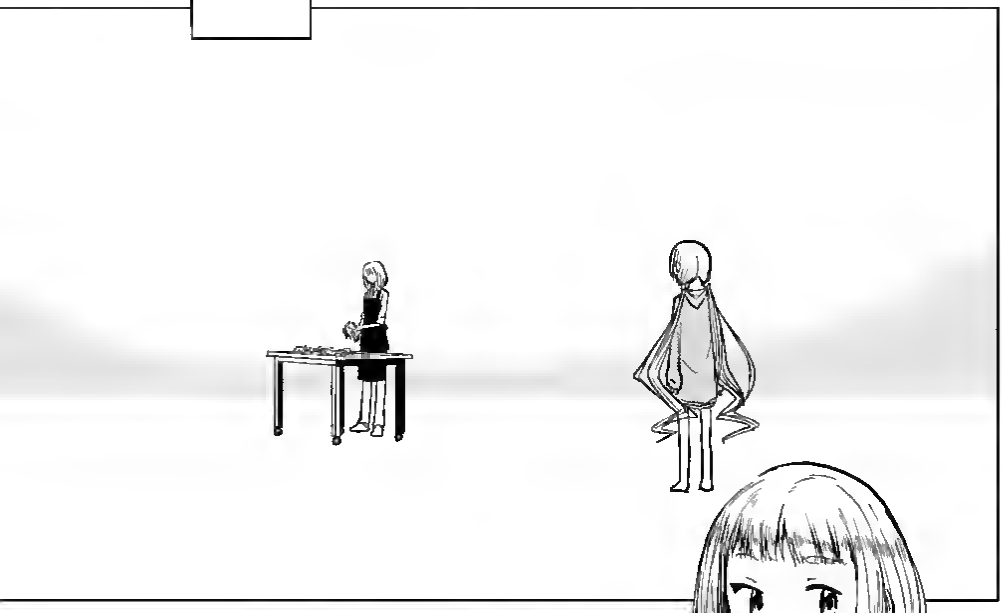
IT'S OKAY. YOUR BODY WILL GET A LITTLE SLUGGISH AND IT MIGHT BE HARD TO THINK--BUT THAT'S ALL.
JUST RELAX FOR A WHILE LONGER, OKAY?
NOW, LET'S RETURN TO "WONDER-LAND."
VRROOO OOO
MNN
HNNG H...!
GAT CLINK

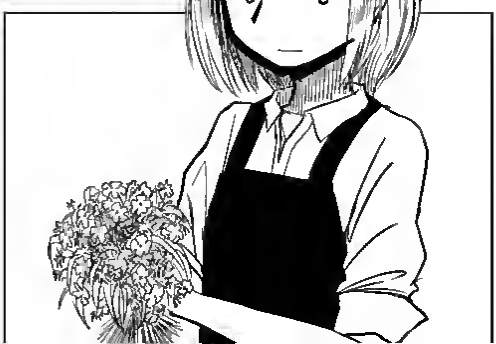
VRROOOO
NO.
!!
NO. SCARY.

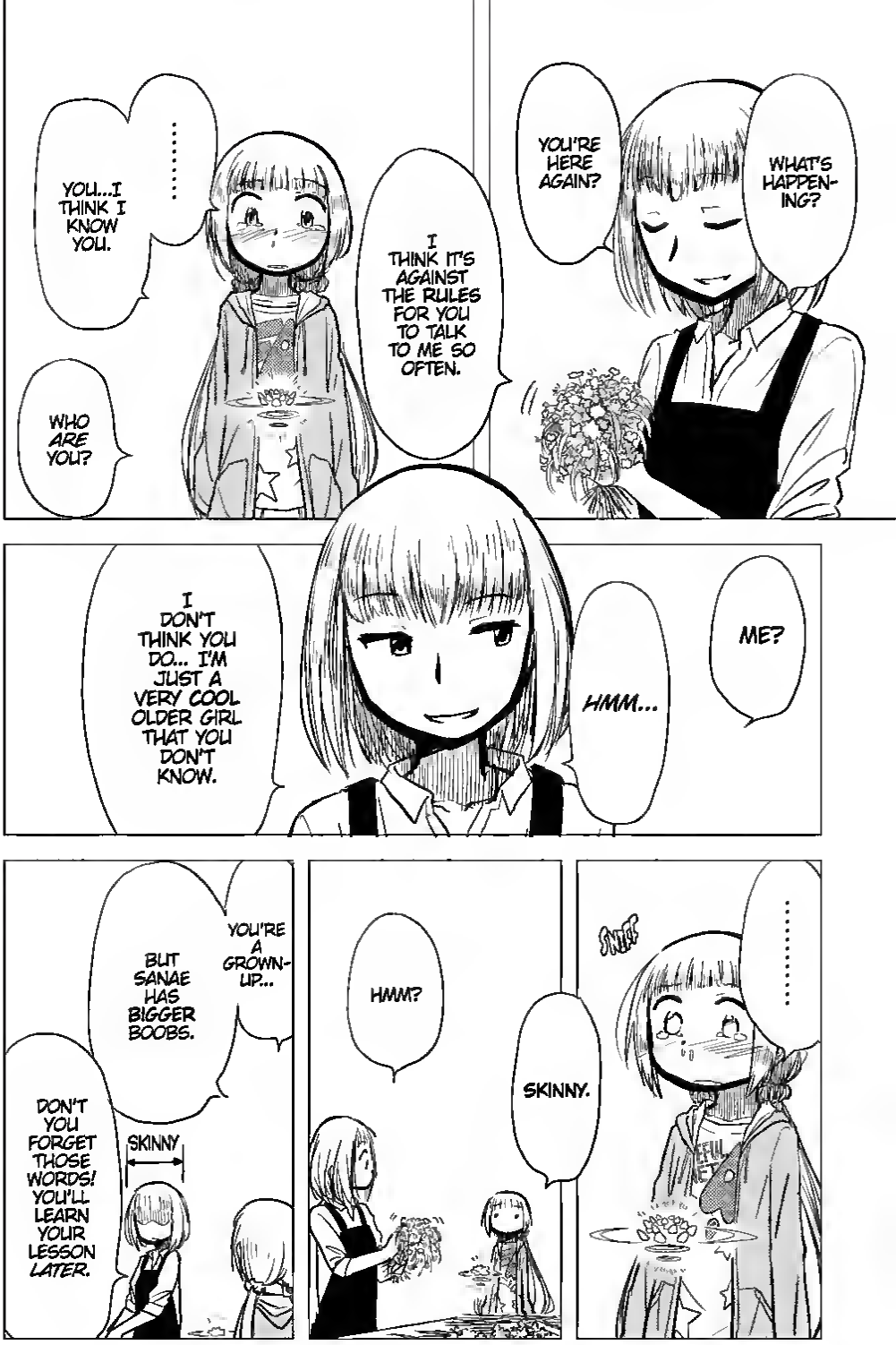

GRIP
GOOD NIGHT.
YOU'RE ACTUALLY MORE DANGER-OUS WHEN YOU'RE FULLY UN-CONSCIOUS, YOU KNOW.

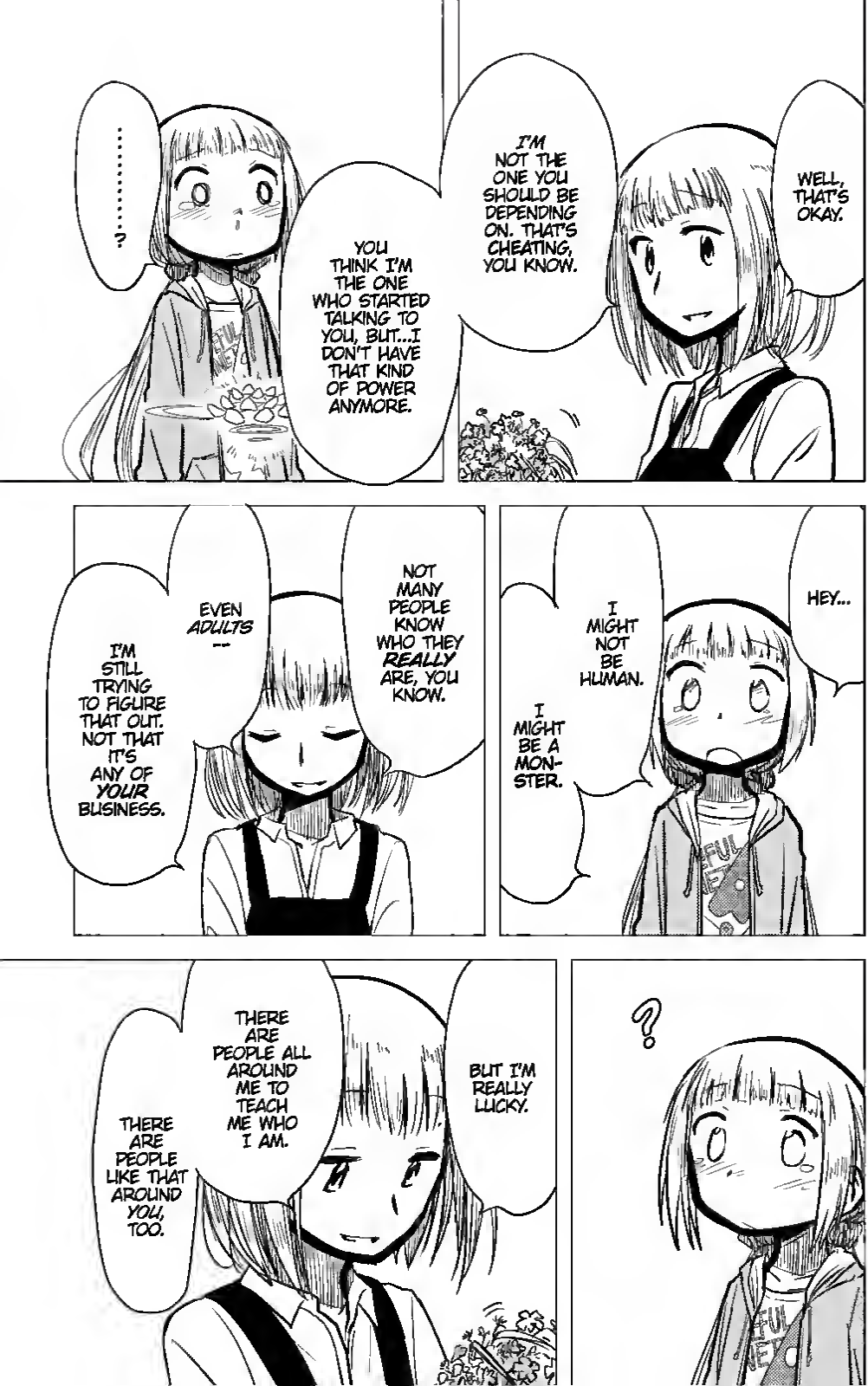

N...O.
PRICK
PSSH
FILTHY.
.....
TOI IN

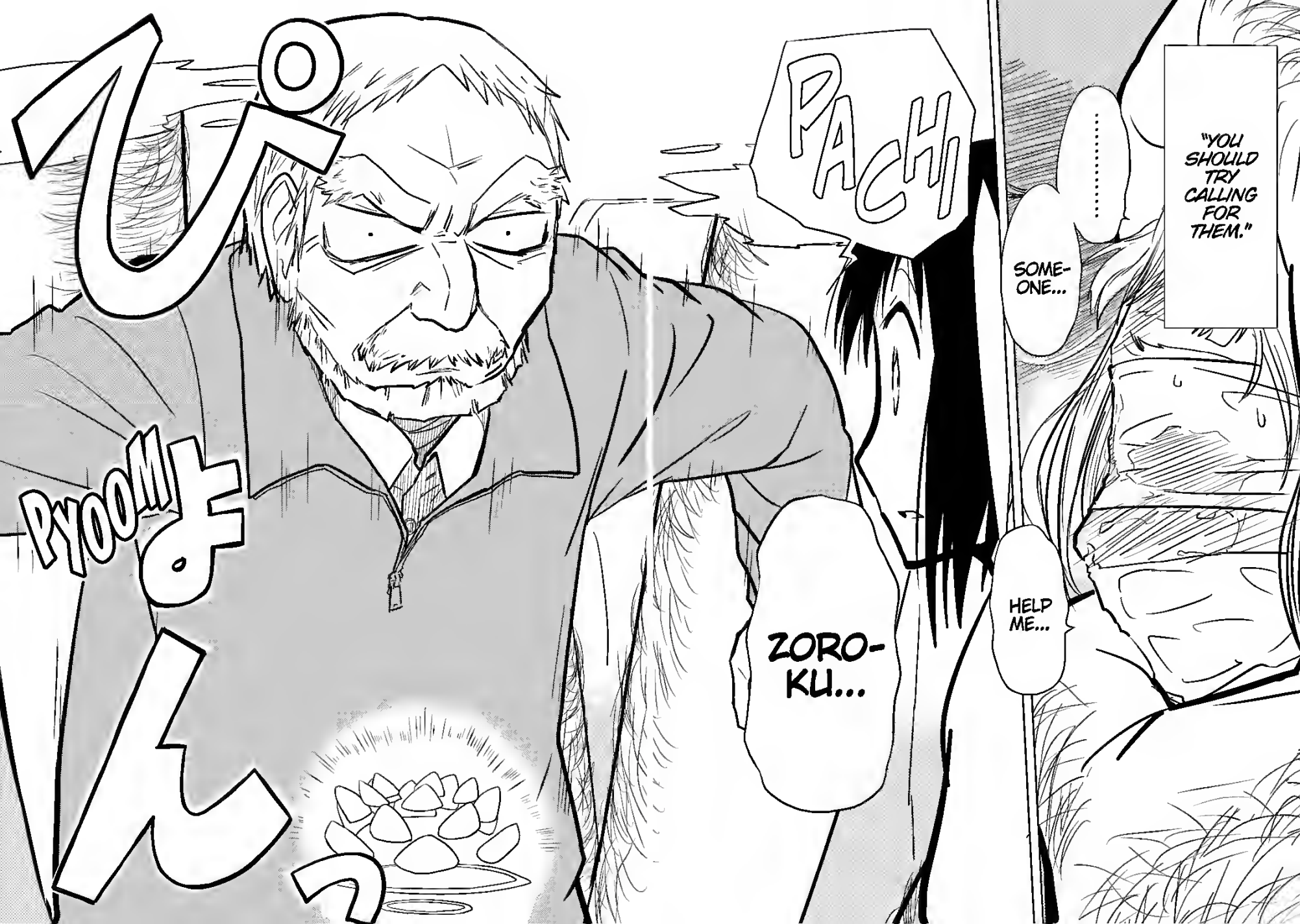
SOME-
ONE...
SAVE
ME...
SOME-
ONE...

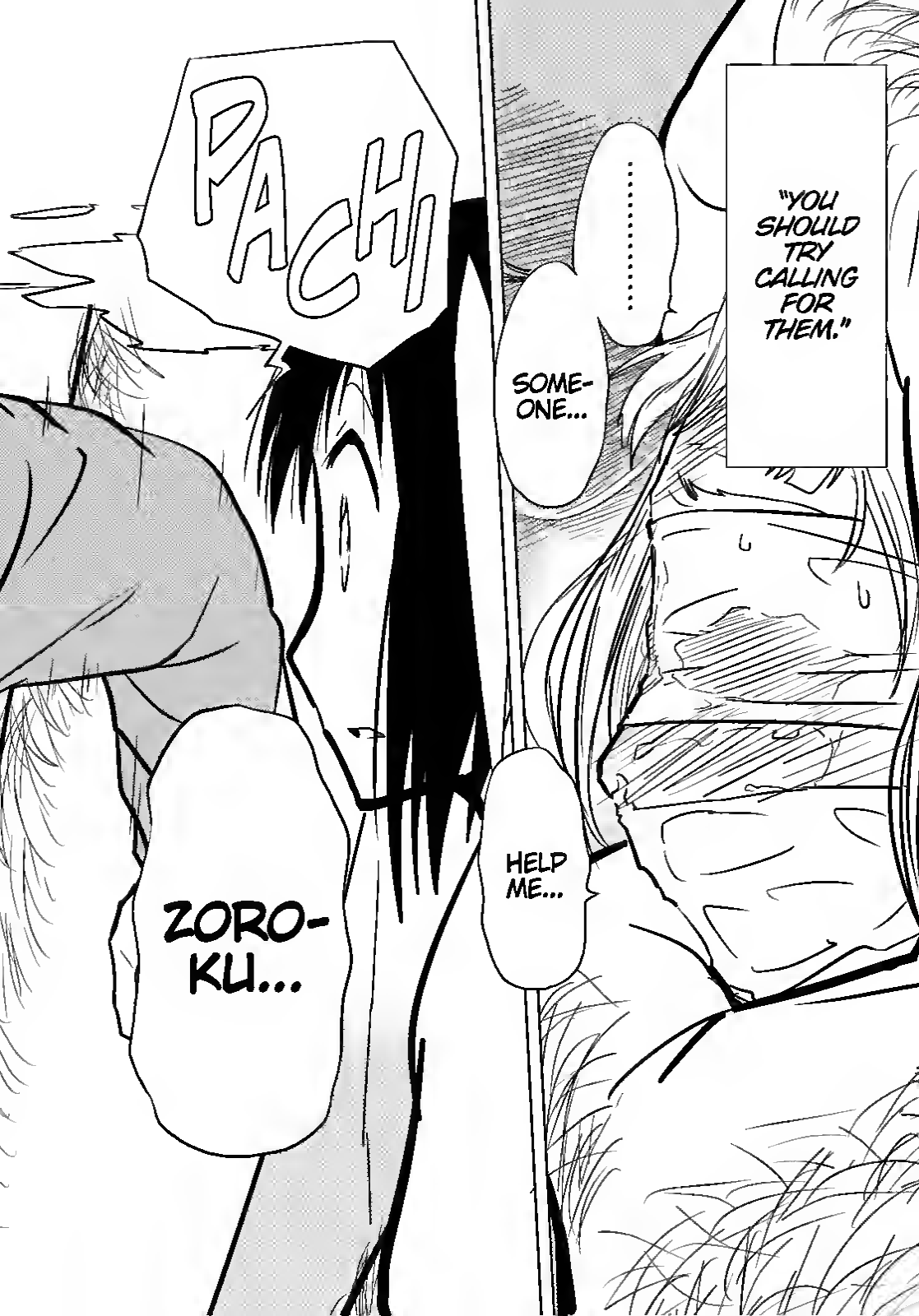


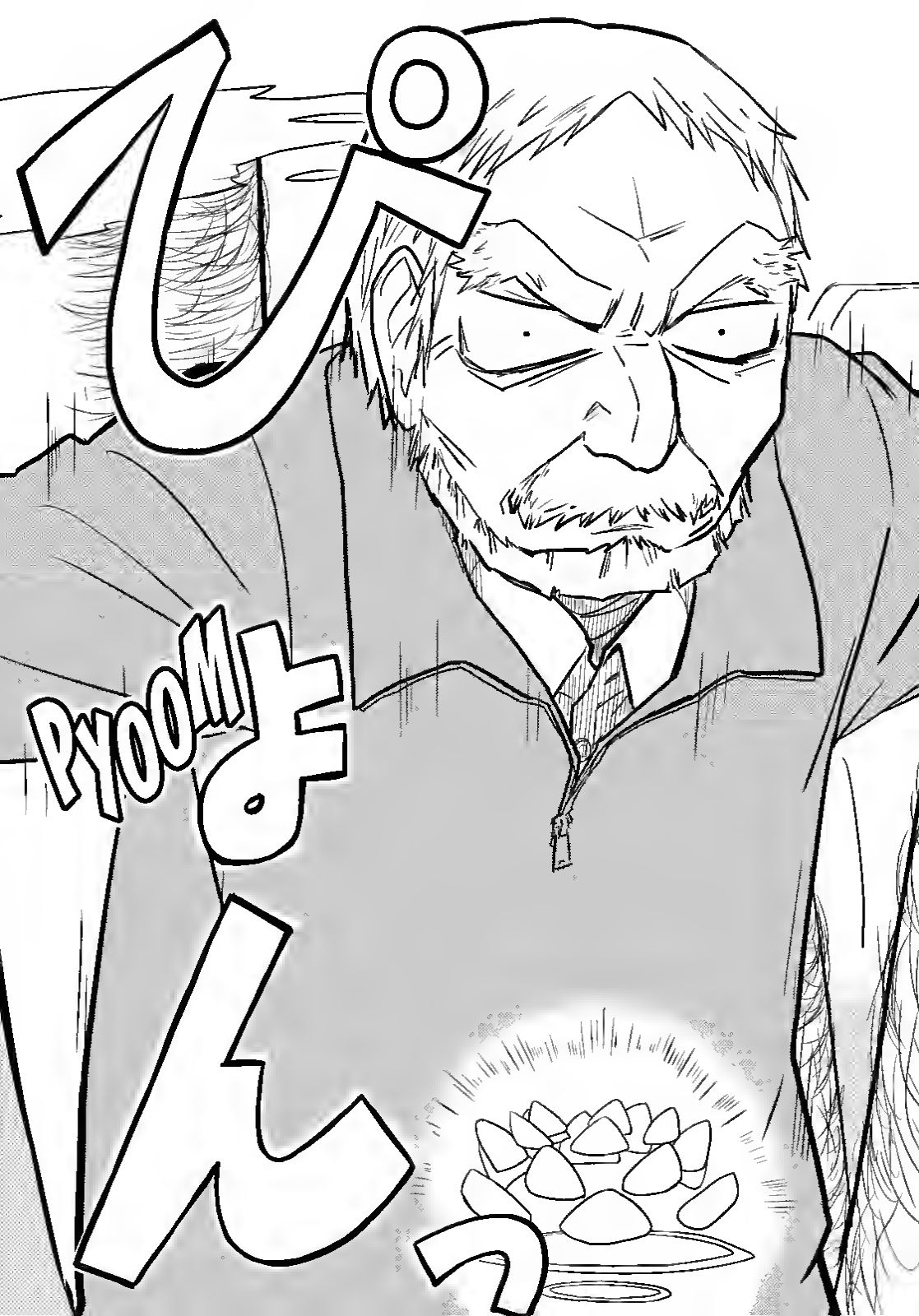


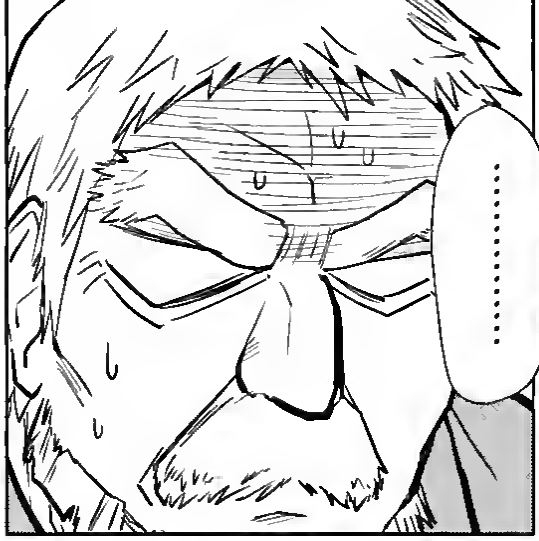

WHAT'S HAPPENING?
YOU'RE HERE AGAIN?
I THINK IT'S AGAINST THE RULES FOR YOU TO TALK TO ME SO OFTEN.
.....
YOU...I THINK I KNOW YOU.
WHO ARE YOU?
ME?
HMM...
I DON'T THINK YOU DO... I'M JUST A VERY COOL OLDER GIRL THAT YOU DON'T KNOW.
.....
SNIF
SKINNY.
HMM?
YOU'RE A GROWN-UP...
BUT SANAE HAS BIGGER BOOBS.
SKINNY
DON'T YOU FORGET THOSE WORDS! YOU'LL LEARN YOUR LESSON LATER.

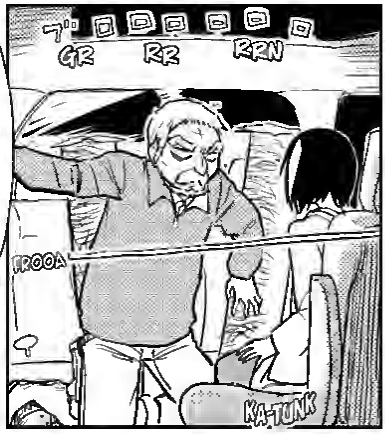

WELL, THAT'S OKAY.
I'M NOT THE ONE YOU SHOULD BE DEPENDING ON. THAT'S CHEATING, YOU KNOW.
YOU THINK I'M THE ONE WHO STARTED TALKING TO YOU, BUT...I DON'T HAVE THAT KIND OF POWER ANYMORE.
.....?
HEY...
I MIGHT NOT BE HUMAN.
I MIGHT BE A MON-STER.
NOT MANY PEOPLE KNOW WHO THEY REALLY ARE, YOU KNOW.
EVEN ADULTS --
I'M STILL TRYING TO FIGURE THAT OUT. NOT THAT IT'S ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS.
?
BUT I'M REALLY LUCKY.
THERE ARE PEOPLE ALL AROUND ME TO TEACH ME WHO I AM.
THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE THAT AROUND YOU, TOO.


"YOU SHOULD TRY CALLING FOR THEM."
.....
SOME-ONE...
HELP ME...
ZORO-KU...
PACHI
PYOOM


"YOU SHOULD TRY CALLING FOR THEM."
.....
SOME-ONE...
HELP ME...
PACHI
ZORO-KU...


ピッ
PYOOM
ドン


.....


GR
RR
R2N
FROOA
KA-TUNK

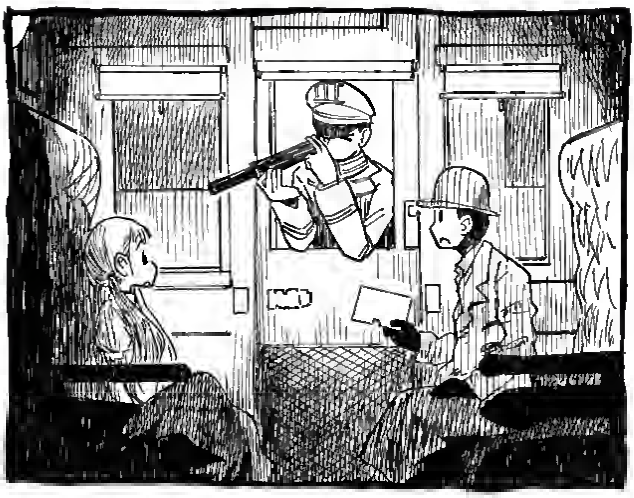
HUH...?

?
KUNK
?
FROOA

HEY!

I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE DON'T DO THE RIGHT THING.
THIS ISN'T A JOKE.
ARE YOU THE ONE WHO GOT ME MIXED UP IN ALL THIS WEIRD STUFF?

Alice & Zoroku

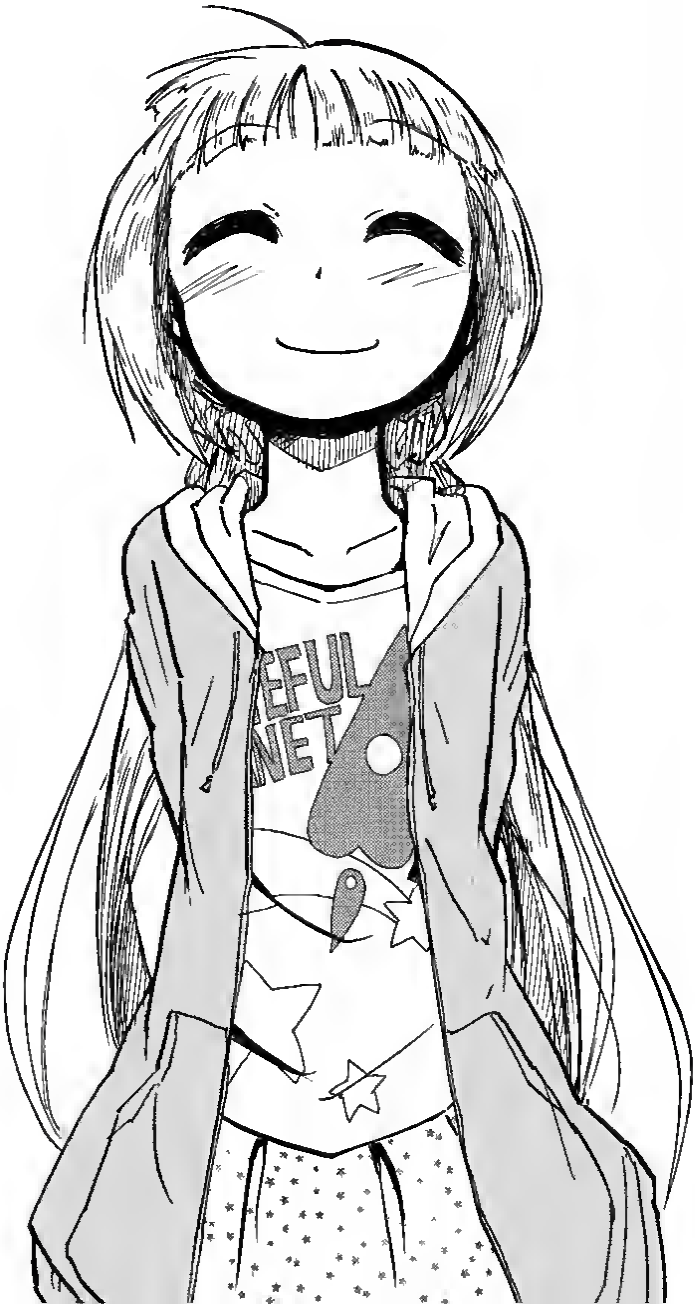


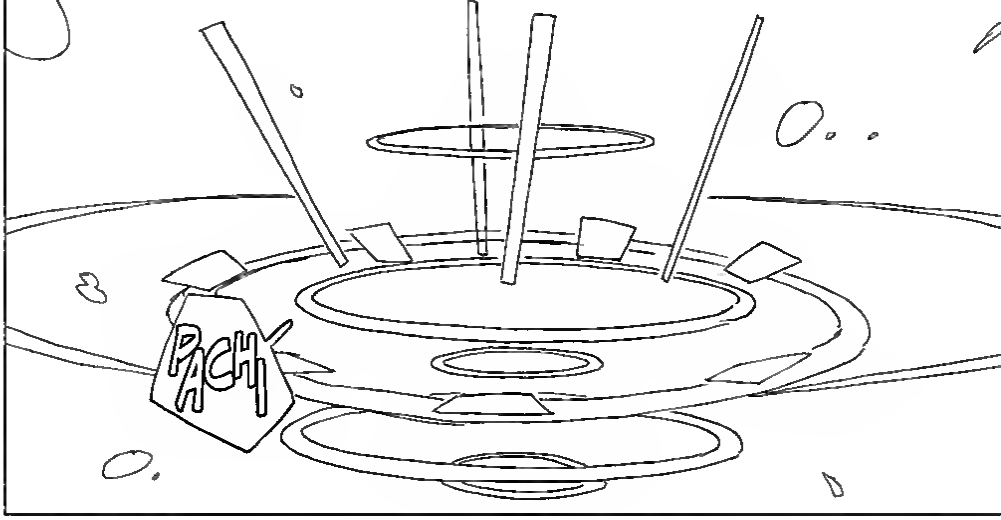
• ◆ •

All this time the Guard was looking at her,
first through a telescope,
then through a microscope,
and then through an opera-glass.
At last he said, "You're traveling the wrong way,"
and shut up the window and went away.

Chapter.6

With Regard to the Passenger Car



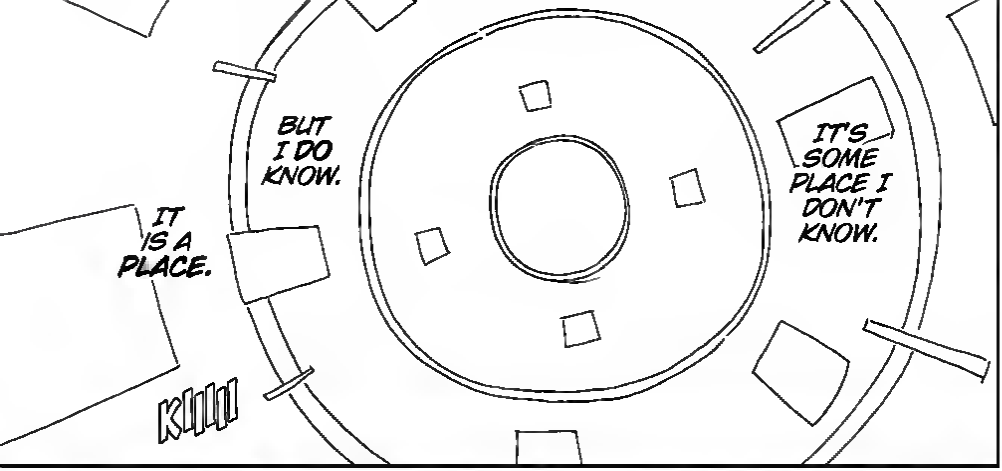


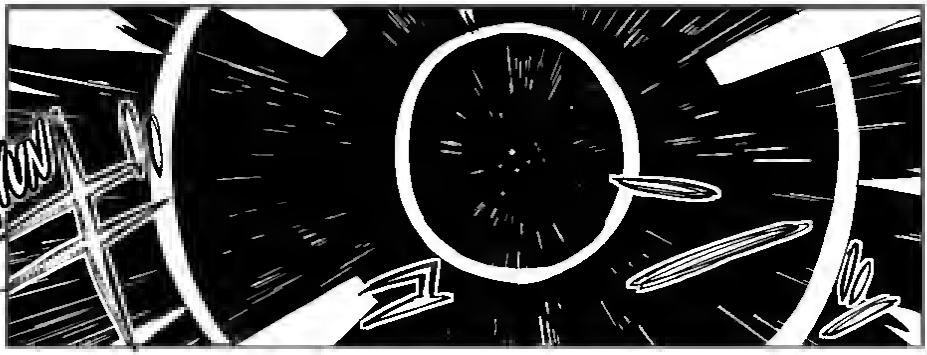
WHERE IS THIS?

.....

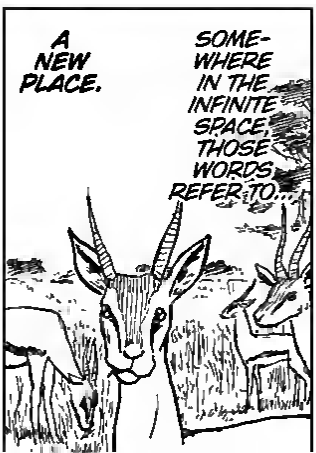
I CAN FEEL I'M SURROUNDED BY SOME KIND OF MASS...

I CAN FEEL SOMETHING INFINITE, SOMETHING **REAL**, COMING TOGETHER IN THIS VAST SPACE.

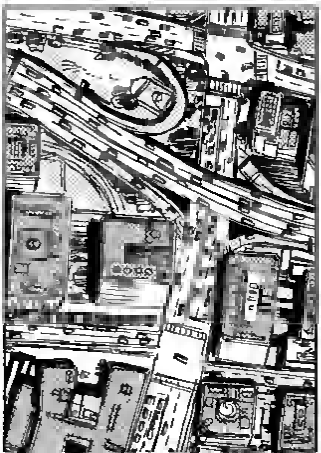

BUT I DO KNOW.
IT'S SOME PLACE I DON'T KNOW.
IT IS A PLACE.
KLLL

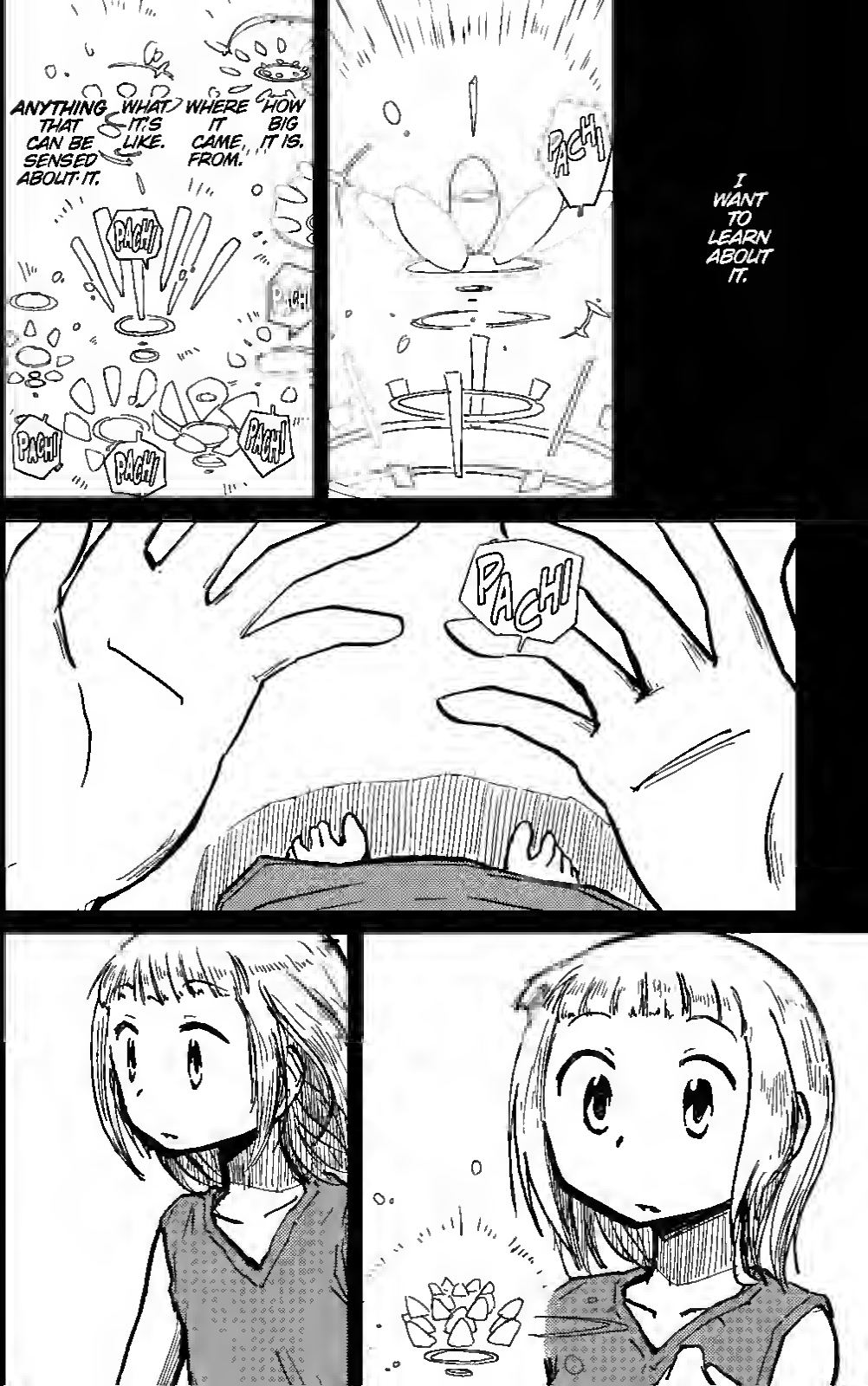

GYUN

PLACE.


A NEW PLACE.
SOMEWHERE IN THE INFINITE SPACE, THOSE WORDS REFER TO...

UNI- VERSE.
SPACE- TIME.
SPACE.

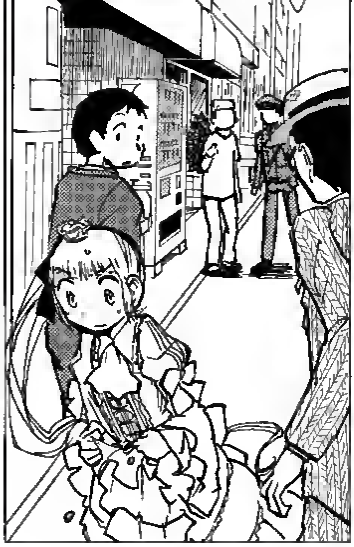


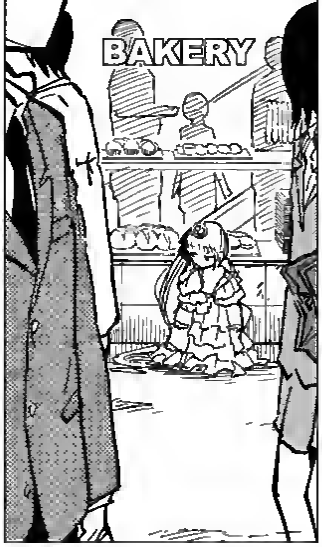

ANYTHING THAT CAN BE SENSED ABOUT IT.
WHAT IT'S LIKE.
WHERE IT CAME FROM.
HOW BIG IT IS.
PACHI
PACHI
PACHI
PACHI
PACHI
PACHI
I WANT TO LEARN ABOUT IT.

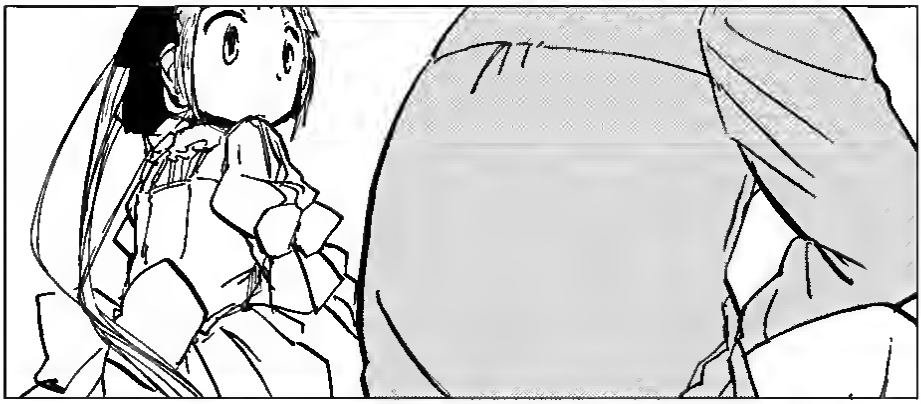
FROOAAR
PACHI

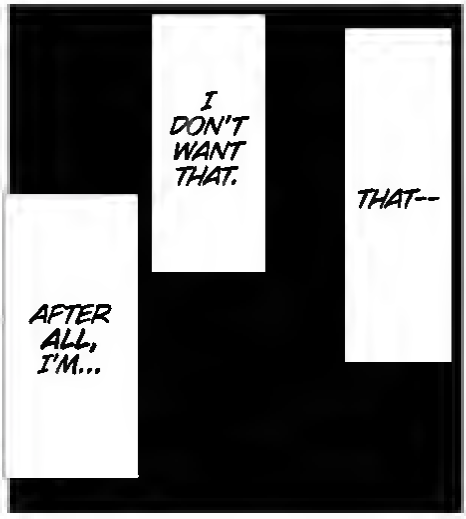
IL GRR IL RRR IL RN IL
NHH
MNH
MMN PH!!
GA-TUNK
GA-TUNK
TROOO
OAAR
PRICK
PSSF
GOOD NIGHT.
GROOOO
TH-CLUNK
GRIP
NO.
NO!
IS THAT WHY I CAN'T STAY IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD?
THEN WHAT AM I?
IF I'M NOT HUMAN...
VRRRROOOOON

WAS IT ALL A MISTAKE?
ALL THE THINGS I WANTED TO SEE...
THOSE MO-MENTS...
TTTTTINKLE
じょろろろろ
FILTHY.
NNNGH
MMGH
CLNK
I CAN'T GO ANY-WHERE?
BE-CAUSE I'M A MON-STER?
BECAUSE I'M ONE OF ALICE'S DREAM-ERS?
I...
HICCUP!
ULINGH
HIC-!




BAKERY




I DON'T WANT THAT.
THAT--
AFTER ALL, I'M...

NARR
SOME-ONE...
HELP ME...
TH-CLUNK
VRRRR
FROOAA
GA-TUNK
"YOU SHOULD TRY CALLING THEM."
PACHI
ZORO-KU...
HEY!
ARE YOU THE ONE...
WHO GOT ME MIXED UP IN ALL THIS WEIRD STUFF?

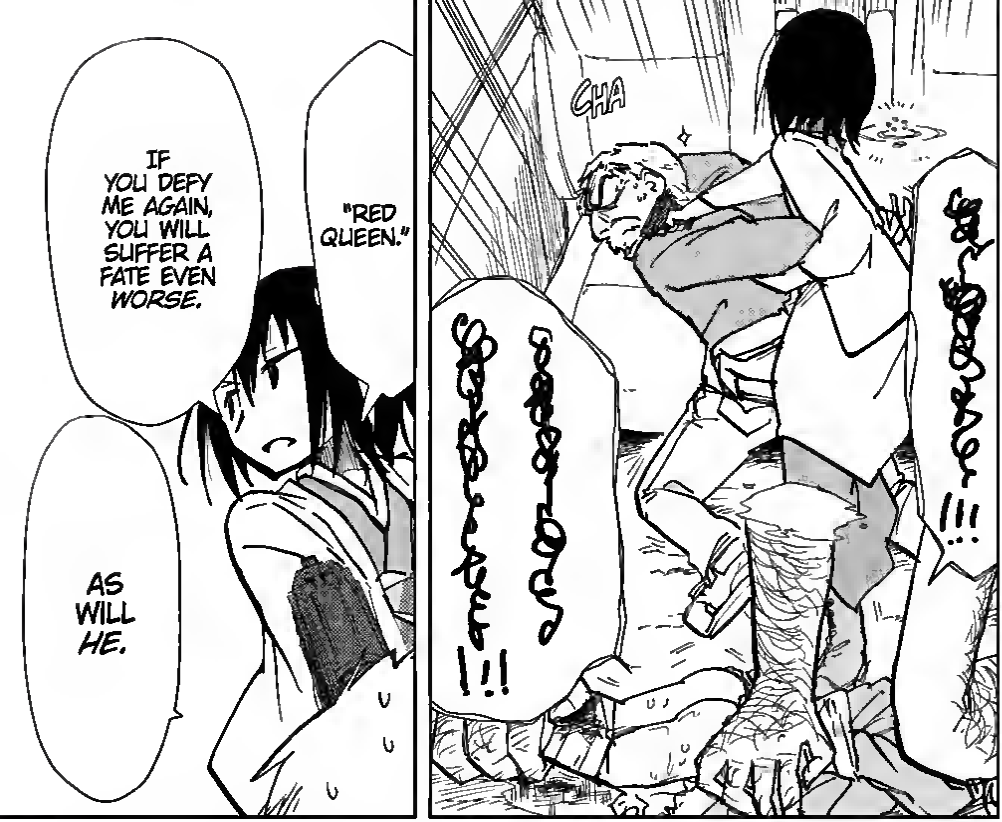
I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE DON'T DO THE RIGHT THING.
THIS ISN'T A JOKE.
RROO
TROO
YOU DEVIANT.
LOOK AT THE HORRIBLE THINGS YOU'RE DOING TO THIS LITTLE GIRL!
NOW, YOU! GET OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW.

HUH --?
WHO ARE YOU?
PACH
GRAB
OO-MPH!
?!
MY APOLOGIES, BUT I WILL HAVE TO RESTRAIN YOU.
REALLY, "RED QUEEN"...
YOU KEEP CREATING SUCH UNNECES-SARY PROBLEMS...
GRRN
WHY... YOU...
LITTLE...
MH ?!
MNGH?
SQUEEEEZE
!!
I'M A FLO-RIST!
I WON'T LET MY ARM STRENGTH AND ENDURANCE TAKE SECOND PLACE TO YOU YOUNGS-TERS!
?

SANA --!!
GRRRN
GRRRN
SANA!! YOU OKAY?!
!
WAIT A...
VVVSH
NNGH !!
SANA...
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME HE'S CALLED ME SANA.
MGH !
WHAT ARE --?
GO AND GET HELP!
THAT NAITOU GUY! I DON'T MUCH LIKE HIM, BUT HE'LL HELP YOU!
HURRY UP AND GO!
GRRRN
GRRRN
SANA, WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT POWER YOU HAD BEFORE?
YOU CAN DO ANYTHING YOU WANT JUST BY THINKING OF IT, CAN'T YOU?
DON'T JUST STAND HERE! HURRY UP AND GET HOME!
GRRRN

HUR-RY UP !!
HUMPH!
IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU WANT ME TO LEAVE YOU BEHIND...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, ZOROKU?
NNRHN!
WHAT?
MRHH ?!
!!
YO--!
BEING QUIET FOR A MOMENT?
WOULD YOU MIND...
CHAK
!!!
HEY !!!
BLAM!!
BANG!!

SANA --!!
!!!
YOU !!!
EXCUSE ME.
!!!!!
O-- OUCH!
HOT!
??!!!
OH...
SHWUP
PACHI
YUNK
THUN
OMPH !!!
WHIRRRRL!!!
TAP

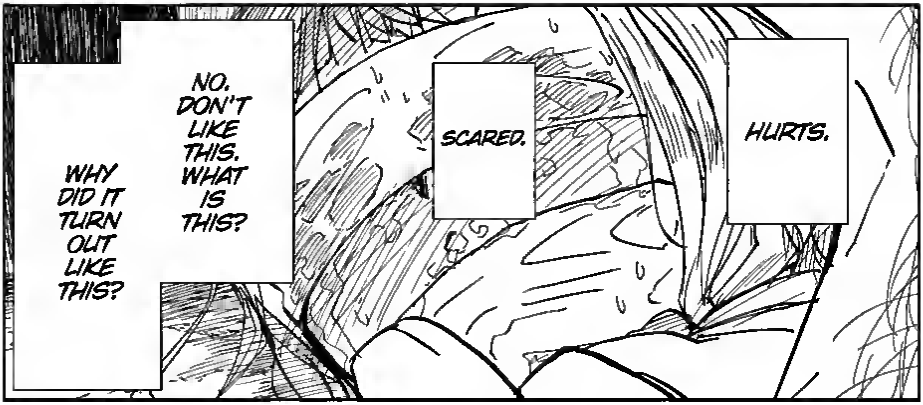

"RED QUEEN."
IF YOU DEFY ME AGAIN, YOU WILL SUFFER A FATE EVEN WORSE.
AS WILL HE.
CHA
!!!
!!!

SANA !!!
YOU !!!
WITH YOUR POWER, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO HEAL SUCH A MINOR INJURY, RIGHT?
THE DATA AT THE LAB MAKES THAT MUCH CLEAR.

AFTER THAT, PLEASE BE QUIET.
DO YOU UNDER-STAND? I AM BEING QUITE SERIOUS.
YOU ARE COMING BACK WITH ME.

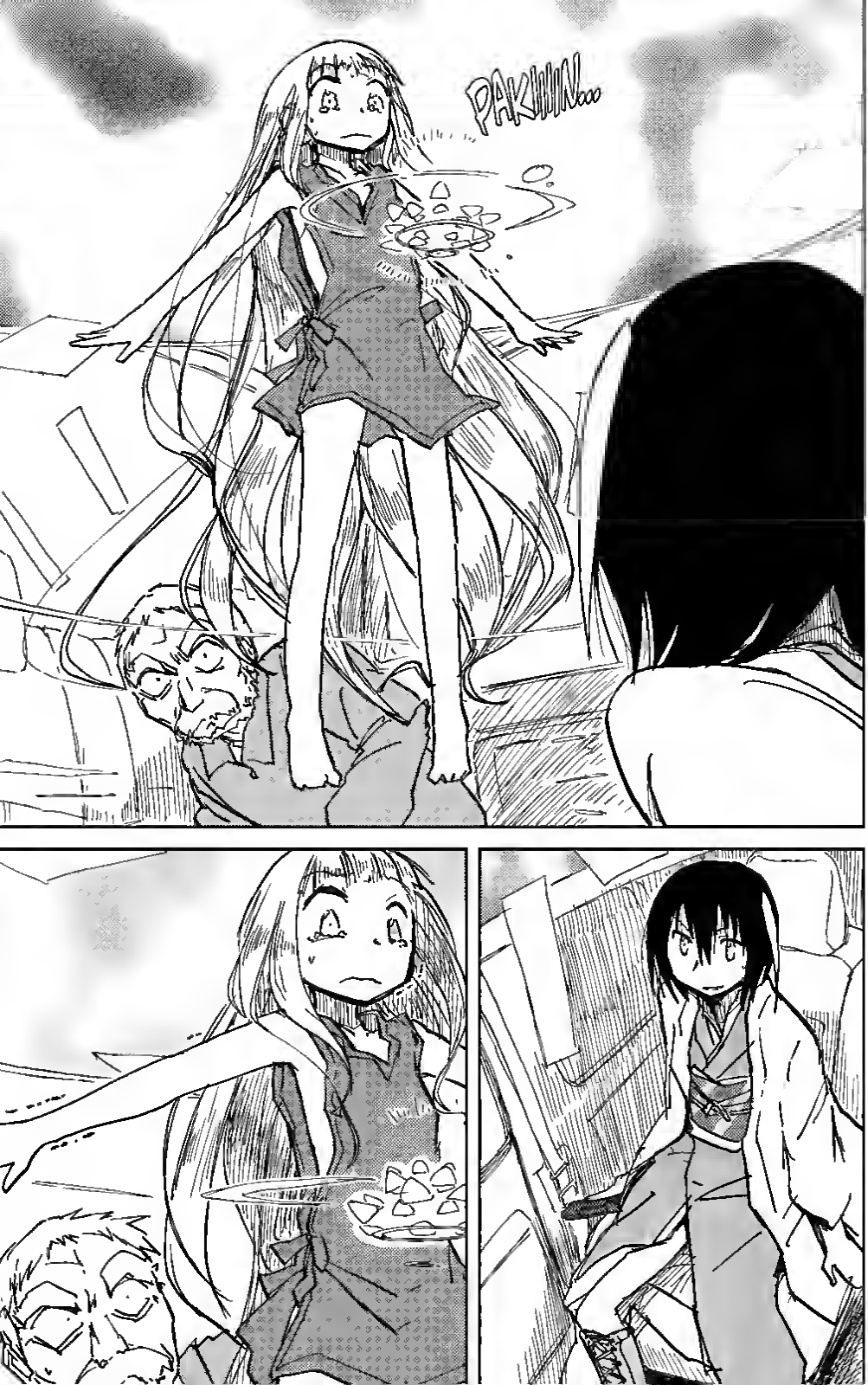
YOU !!!
LET GO OF ME!!!
MY APOLOGIES. I HAD NOT INTENDED TO RESORT TO VIOLENCE.
IF YOU WOULD PLEASE SIMPLY REMAIN QUIET, I WILL CAUSE YOU NO FURTHER INJURIES.
ISN'T THAT RIGHT, "RED QUEEN"?
SANA !!
HURTS.
SANA, GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF!
HURTS.
SANA !!
HURTS ...!
WHAT IS THIS? HURTS. GOING TO DIE.
ZORO-KU.
HURTS.
KNEE? THIGH?
SCARED.
WHAT PART HURTS?
SCARED.
NO.
OOZE
OOZE

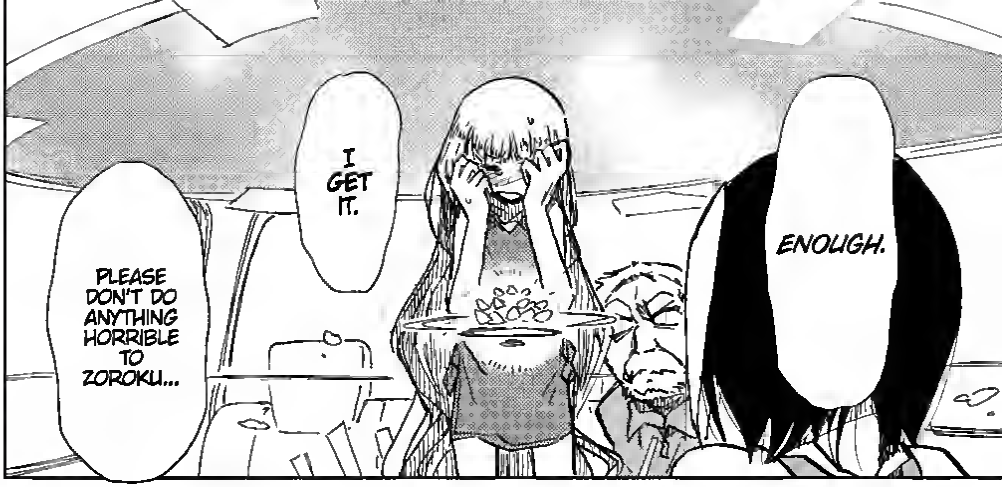
KLUNK
SCARED.
HURTS.
VOICE--I HEAR HIS VOICE, BUT WHERE IS ZOROKU?
THD
KLUNK
ZOROKU.
WHERE ARE YOU, ZOROKU?
THD

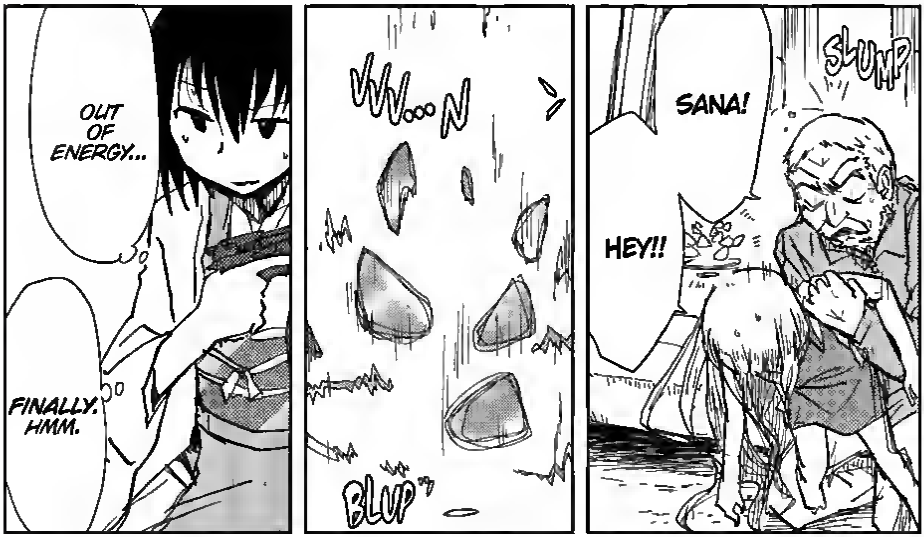

WHY DID IT TURN OUT LIKE THIS?
NO. DON'T LIKE THIS. WHAT IS THIS?
SCARED.
HURTS.

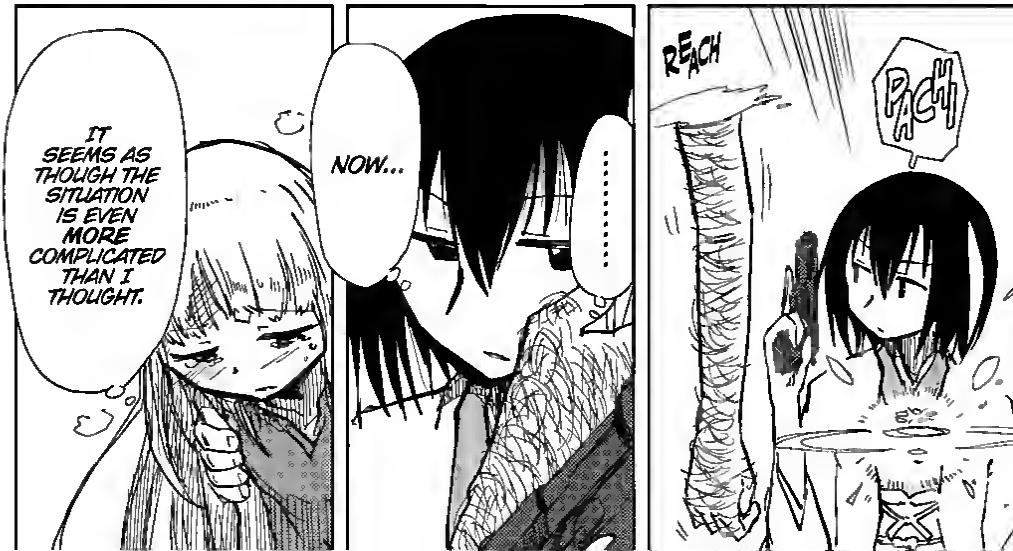
BECAUSE I CALLED ZOROKU? IS THAT WHY?
BECAUSE I'M NOT HUMAN, BUT I'M ACTING LIKE A HUMAN?
BECAUSE I'M--NOT HUMAN?

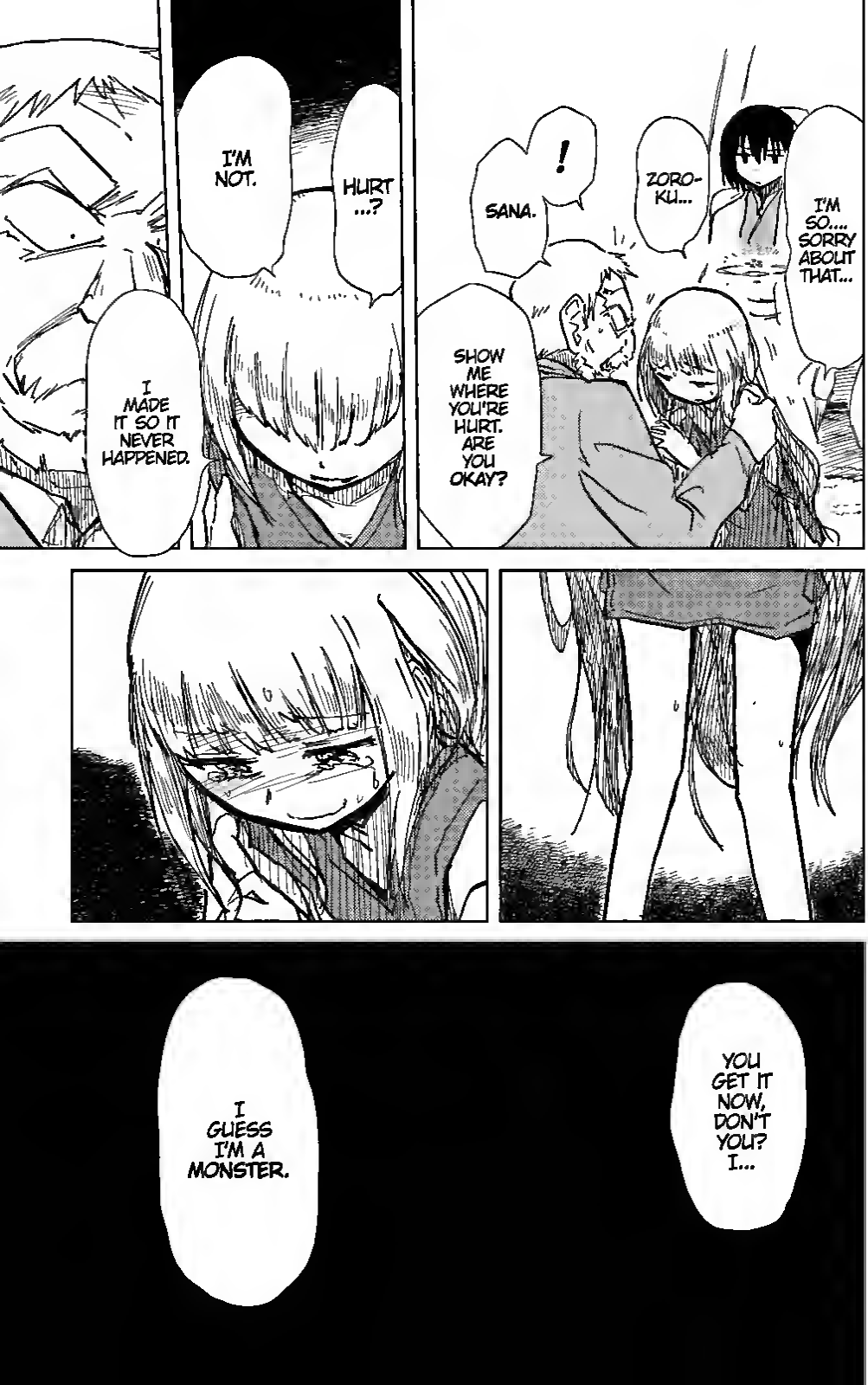
I SEE.
NNH!!
PACHI
FROOOOAR
I UNDER-STAND.
KA
?!!
WHUD
BWISH
OOF--!
BLUP
ZZZZZZZT
BACHI
!


PAKUUN...

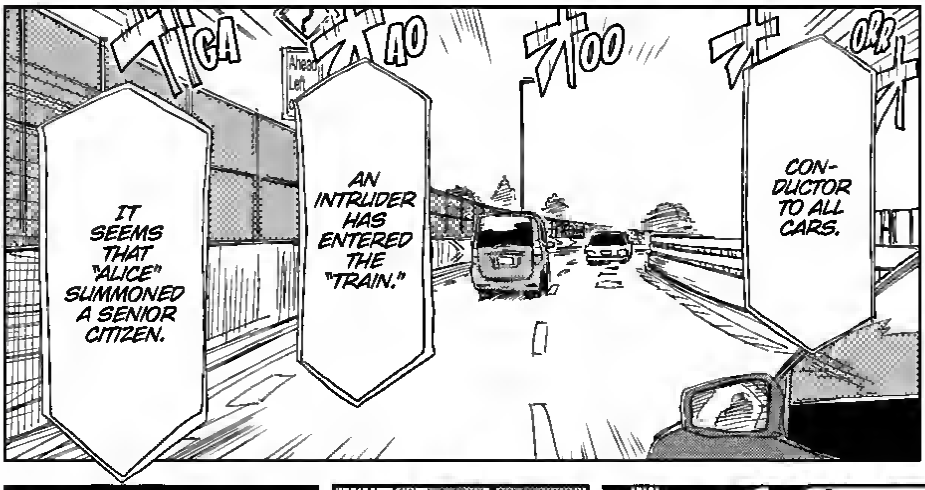

I GET IT.
ENOUGH.
PLEASE DON'T DO ANYTHING HORRIBLE TO ZOROKU...


OUT OF ENERGY...
FINALLY. HMM.
VVV...N
BLUP
SLUMP
SANA!
HEY!!

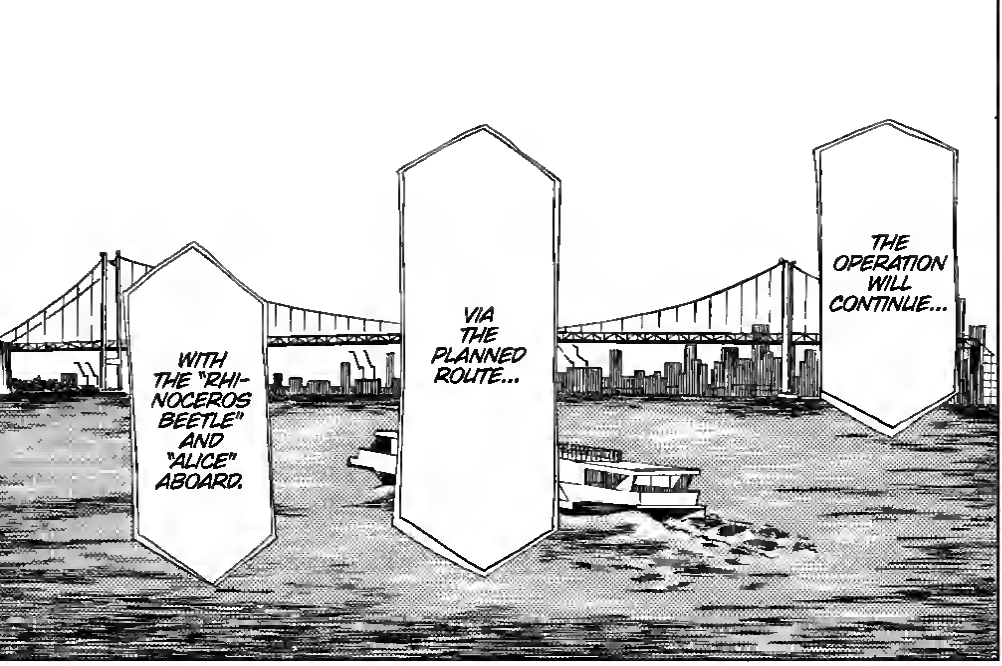

IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THE SITUATION IS EVEN MORE COMPLICATED THAN I THOUGHT.
NOW...
.....
REACH
PACH

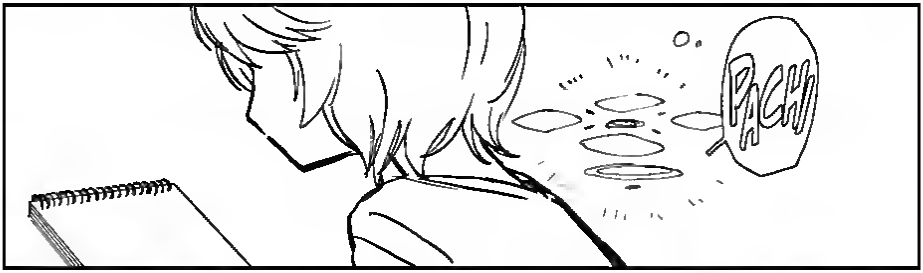

I'M SO.... SORRY ABOUT THAT...
ZORO-KU...
!
SANA.
SHOW ME WHERE YOU'RE HURT. ARE YOU OKAY?
HURT ...?
I'M NOT.
I MADE IT SO IT NEVER HAPPENED.
YOU GET IT NOW, DON'T YOU? I...
I GUESS I'M A MONSTER.

ゴ"RRRMMM...
オ オ・・・

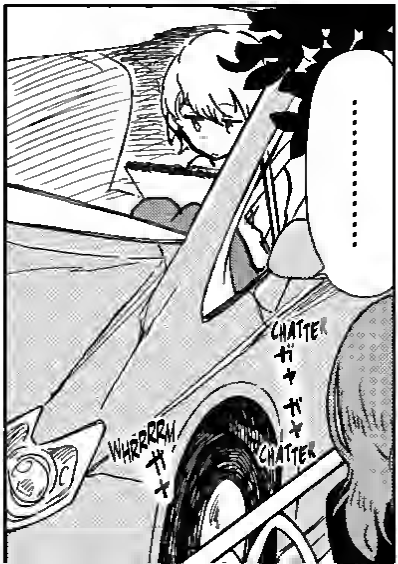

GA
AO
OO
OB
Ahead
Left
IT SEEMS THAT "ALICE" SUMMONED A SENIOR CITIZEN.
AN INTRUDER HAS ENTERED THE "TRAIN."
CONDUCTOR TO ALL CARS.

GRO
ONN
VRROOOM
ALL WORKERS SHOULD BE VIGILANT IN CASE OF FURTHER INCIDENTS.
IN THE NAME OF CAUTION, THE ROUTE HAS BEEN MODIFIED VIA F6.
THE "RHINOCEROS BEETLE" HAS DEALT WITH THE SITUATION INSIDE THE "TRAIN". HOWEVER...


WITH THE "RHINOCEROS BEETLE" AND "ALICE" ABOARD.
VIA THE PLANNED ROUTE...
THE OPERATION WILL CONTINUE...


PACH

VRROOO...


.....
CHATTER
CHATTER
WHRRRRR

PAKIN
?!
VUUURR
HUH? WHAT'S THAT?
?
WHAT IS IT?
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER

WELL, YOU KNOW--- WE'RE ALREADY DONE OUR JOB.
OOOO
WE'LL LEAVE THE REST TO MINNIE C.
YEO
DID YOU WANT TO RIDE IT? THE BOAT?

HEY, HEY. WHAT'RE YOU DOING, CLEO?
RM
DOESN'T MATTER...
BRRRR
AREN'T WE GOING TO RIDE THAT, KITOU-SAN?

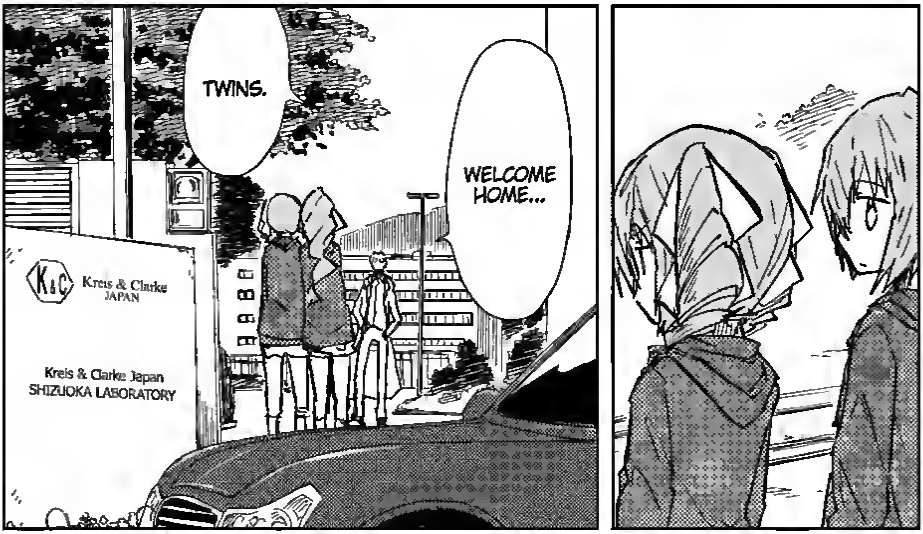
HMM.

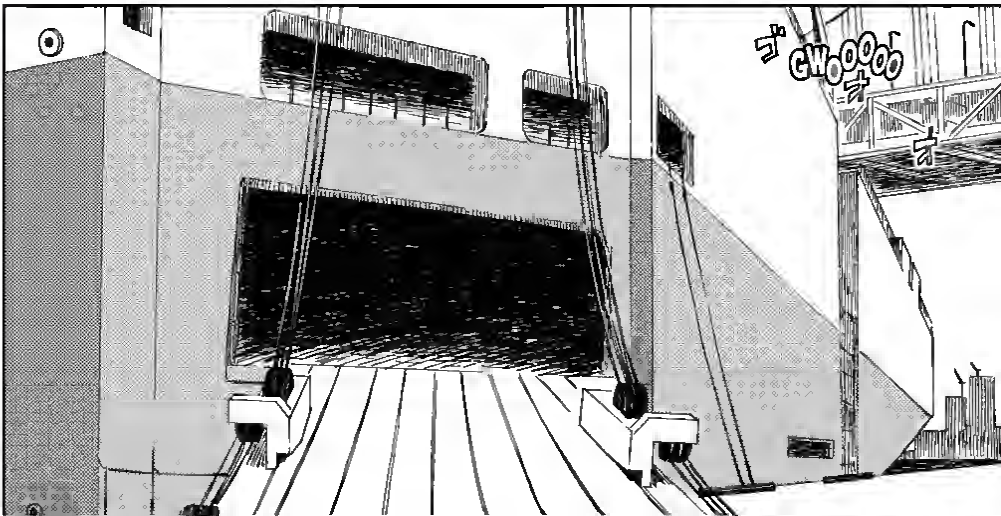
SORRY ABOUT ALL THIS. WE'VE BEEN WORKING YOU PRETTY HARD SINCE YESTERDAY.
.....
DOESN'T MATTER ...

BRRRRMM
.....
DOESN'T MATTER...
I DON'T CARE EITHER WAY.

YOU'RE AN INTERESTING ALICE'S DREAMER, TOO, AREN'T YOU?
I MEAN, THE WAY YOU CAN DRAW THINGS AND THEY TURN INTO CARDS JUST LIKE THAT...!
I WOULDN'T MIND HAVING THAT KIND OF POWER MYSELF.
DOESN'T MATTER ...
IT'S NOT FUN.
AND "ALICE"-- TOO GIRLY. DON'T LIKE.
HA HA!
WELL... THAT'S FINE.
VRROOOOOM
HUNGRY.
HURRY HOME. WANT TO PLAY VIDEO GAMES.
GROOOO
OKAY.
SHOULD WE GRAB A BITE TO EAT BEFORE WE GET ON THE HIGHWAY?
VRRROOOO
.....
GROOO
GRRROOO

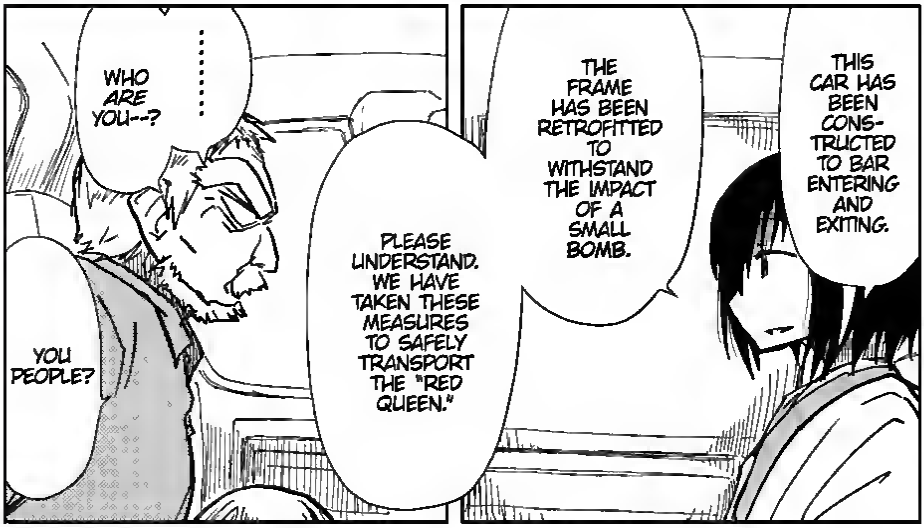
WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT IT?
I DON'T GET WHY YOU'D GO TO A NOISY PLACE LIKE THIS ON PURPOSE. I WANT TO GO HOME.
STUPID.


WELCOME HOME...
TWINS.
Kreis & Clarke JAPAN
Kreis & Clarke Japan SHIZUOKA LABORATORY

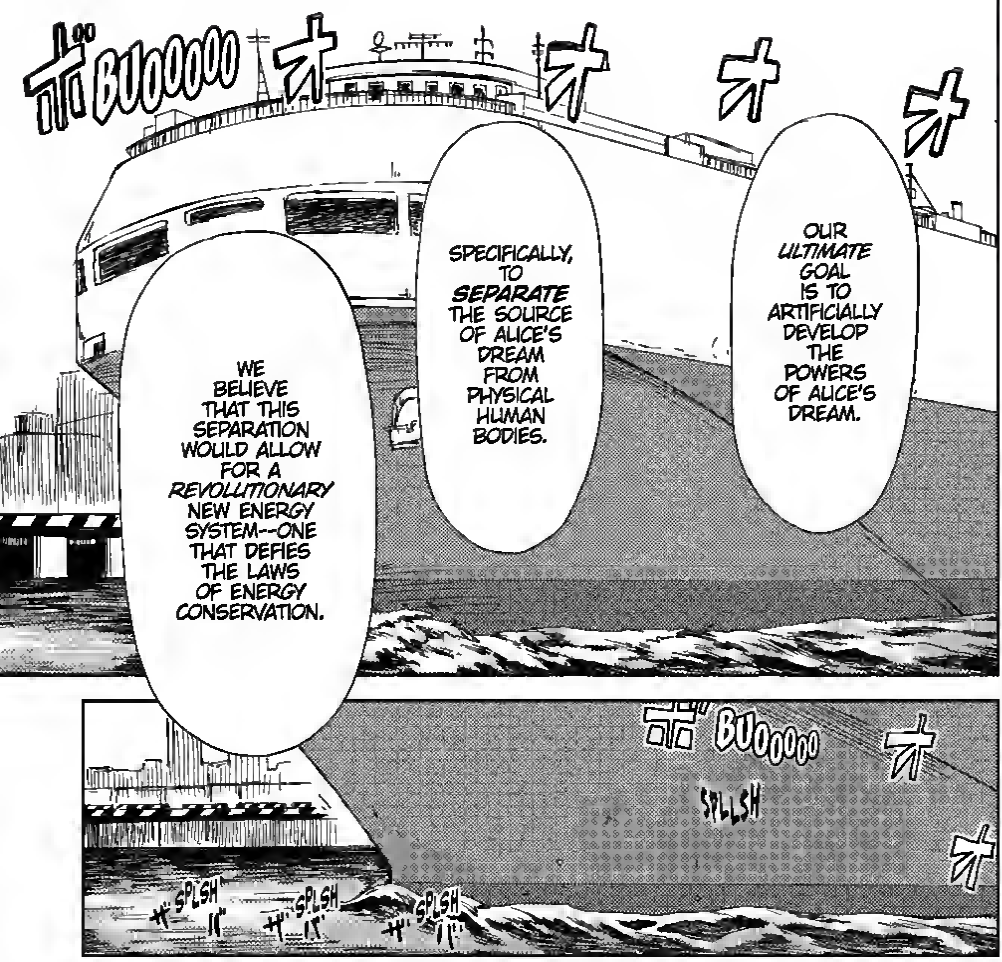

ゴ GWoooo

VRRRRNNNN
KRK
GWOOO
WE'RE STOPPING.
BUT EVERYTHING'S SHAKING... WE MUST BE ON A BOAT.
BACK AT THE HOUSE-- WE NOTICED THAT YOU HAD DISAPPEARED ALL OF A SUDDEN... THEN I HEARD A VOICE CALLING ME FROM SOMEWHERE... AND BEFORE I KNEW IT, I WAS HERE.
I WAS SURPRISED, BUT...
I'M GETTING USED TO SURPRISES.
SNIFFLE...
SORRY.
SORRY ABOUT THIS...
ZORO-KU.
SNIFF...
.....
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
HIC-CUP!

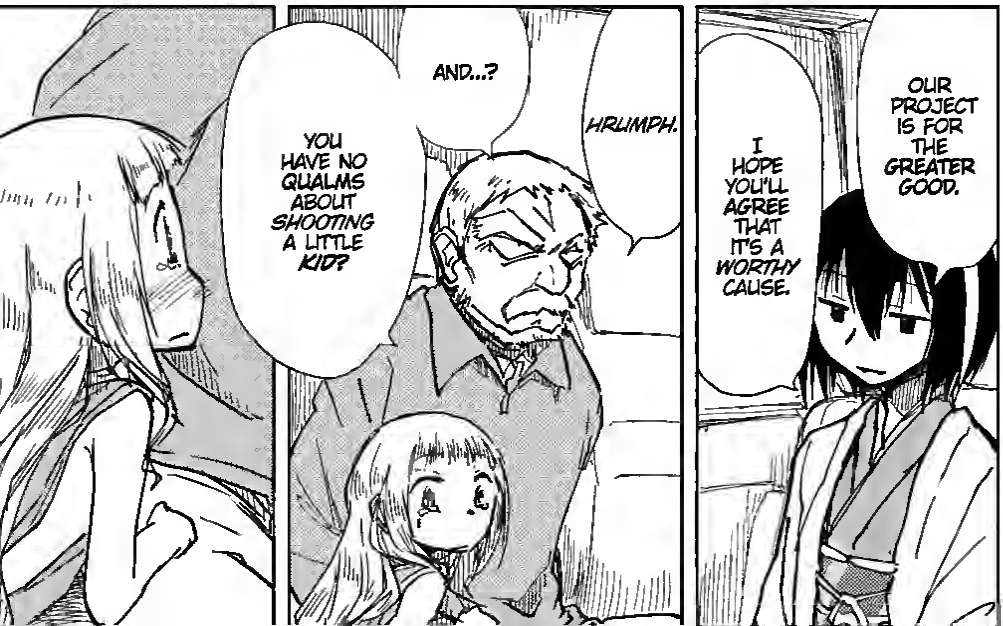
KASHIMURA ZOROKU-SAN.
I AM VERY SORRY...
BUT I'M AFRAID YOU WILL BE ACCOMPANYING US TO OUR TARGET LOCATION.


THIS CAR HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTED TO BAR ENTERING AND EXITING.
THE FRAME HAS BEEN RETROFITTED TO WITHSTAND THE IMPACT OF A SMALL BOMB.
PLEASE UNDERSTAND. WE HAVE TAKEN THESE MEASURES TO SAFELY TRANSPORT THE "RED QUEEN."
WHO ARE YOU--?
YOU PEOPLE?

MY NAME IS MIRIAM C. TACHIBANA. I AM AMERICAN.
I'M WORKING ON A NATIONAL PROJECT, IN COOPERATION WITH BOTH THE U.S. AND JAPANESE GOVERNMENTS.
OUR GOAL IS TO RESEARCH ALICE'S DREAM.

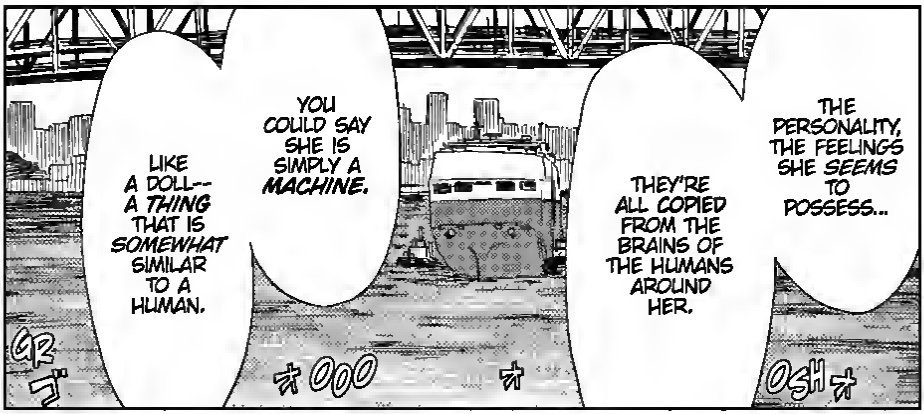

BUOOOOO
OUR ULTIMATE GOAL IS TO ARTIFICIALLY DEVELOP THE POWERS OF ALICE'S DREAM.
SPECIFICALLY, TO SEPARATE THE SOURCE OF ALICE'S DREAM FROM PHYSICAL HUMAN BODIES.
WE BELIEVE THAT THIS SEPARATION WOULD ALLOW FOR A REVOLUTIONARY NEW ENERGY SYSTEM--ONE THAT DEFIES THE LAWS OF ENERGY CONSERVATION.

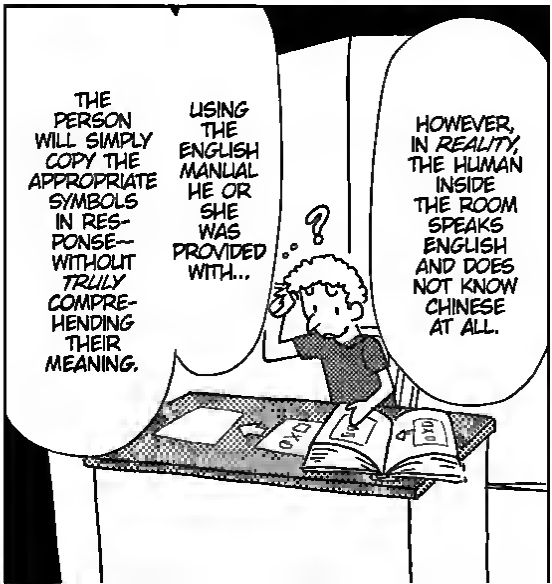
BUOOOOO
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH


OUR PROJECT IS FOR THE GREATER GOOD.
I HOPE YOU'LL AGREE THAT IT'S A WORTHY CAUSE.
HRUMPH.
AND..?
YOU HAVE NO QUALMS ABOUT SHOOTING A LITTLE KID?

HOWEVER, SHE IS A PHENOMENON, AN UNKNOWN BEING WHO MIMICS HUMAN BEHAVIOR.
IT SEEMS SHE HERSELF HAS BEGUN TO REMEMBER A LITTLE...
EEP!

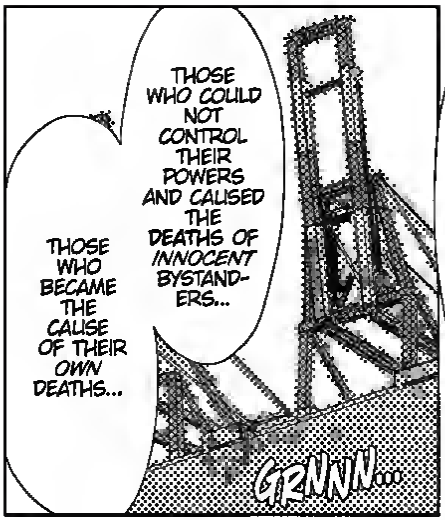
THE "RED QUEEN" IS NOT HUMAN.
SHE-- I SHALL USE "SHE" MERELY AS A CONVENIENCE, BUT...

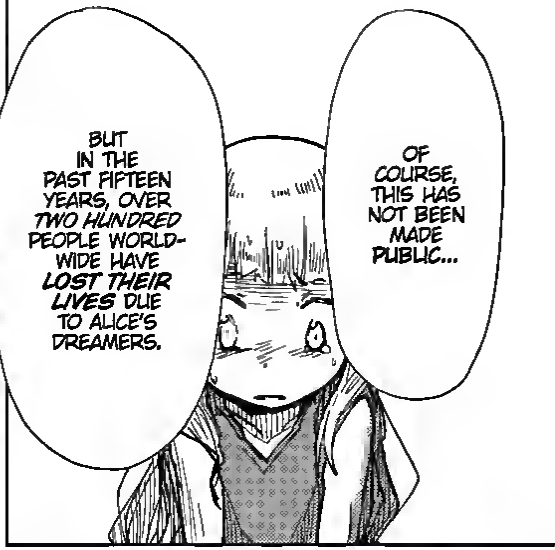

LIKE A DOLL-- A THING THAT IS SOMEWHAT SIMILAR TO A HUMAN.
YOU COULD SAY SHE IS SIMPLY A MACHINE.
THEY'RE ALL COPIED FROM THE BRAINS OF THE HUMANS AROUND HER.
THE PERSONALITY, THE FEELINGS SHE SEEMS TO POSSESS...
GR ゴ
オOOO オ
OSH オ

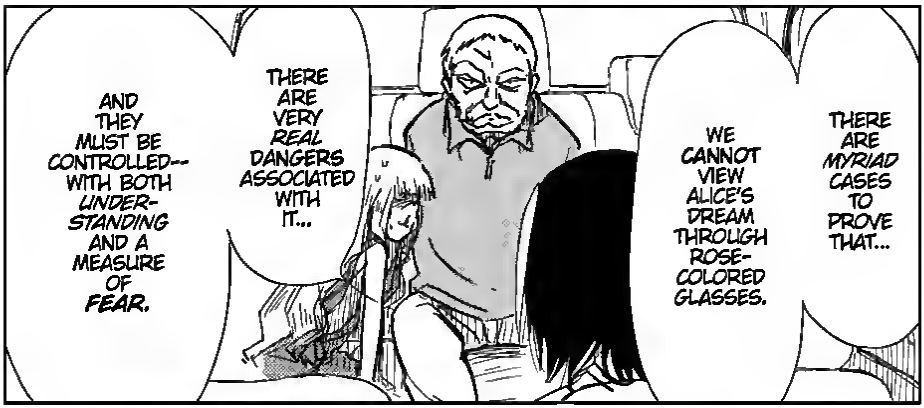

THE PERSON WILL SIMPLY COPY THE APPROPRIATE SYMBOLS IN RES-PONSE-- WITHOUT TRULY COMPRE-HENDING THEIR MEANING.
USING THE ENGLISH MANUAL HE OR SHE WAS PROVIDED WITH...
HOWEVER, IN REALITY, THE HUMAN INSIDE THE ROOM SPEAKS ENGLISH AND DOES NOT KNOW CHINESE AT ALL.

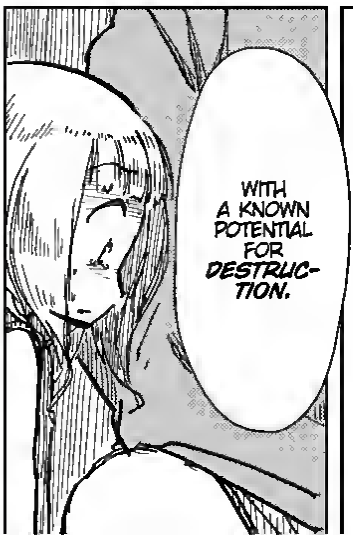
IF YOU WRITE SOME CHINESE ON A PIECE OF PAPER AND SLIDE IT BENEATH THE DOOR, THE HUMAN INSIDE THE ROOM WILL REPLY IN CHINESE.
LET ME GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE. THERE IS A ROOM WITH A HUMAN INSIDE.
?

THIS IS A FAMOUS THOUGHT EXPERIMENT CALLED THE "CHINESE ROOM."
IT SEEMS FROM THE OUTSIDE THAT A CONVERSATION IS TAKING PLACE. HOWEVER, THIS IS NOT THE CASE.
WE BELIEVE THAT WHAT EXISTS INSIDE THE "RED QUEEN" IS AN UNKNOWN SYSTEM OF A SIMILAR NATURE.
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND.
TO ME, SHE LOOKS LIKE A NORMAL LITTLE GIRL.
AND I DON'T THINK IT'S RIGHT TO TREAT HER SO HORRIBLY.
JOLT
EVEN IF WHAT'S INSIDE IS...
POISONOUS GASES OR NUCLEAR WEAPONS WITH JUST AN EXTERIOR THAT SEEMS SENTIENT?
HUH?

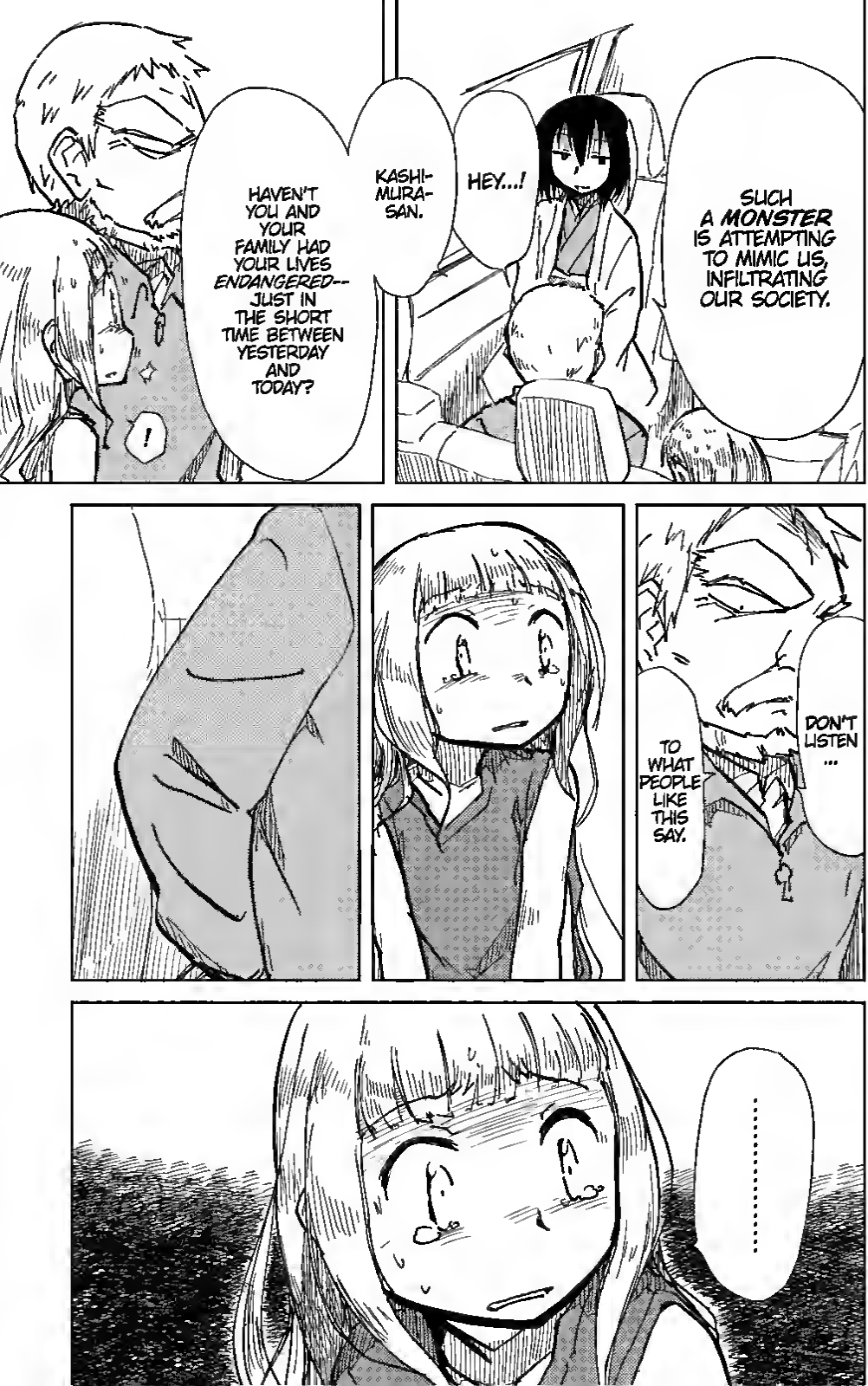

THOSE WHO BECAME THE CAUSE OF THEIR OWN DEATHS...
THOSE WHO COULD NOT CONTROL THEIR POWERS AND CAUSED THE DEATHS OF INNOCENT BYSTANDERS...
GRNNN...

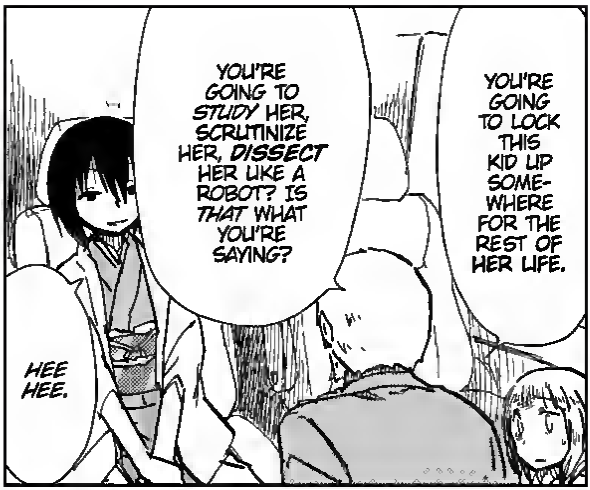

OF COURSE, THIS HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC...
BUT IN THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS, OVER TWO HUNDRED PEOPLE WORLD-WIDE HAVE LOST THEIR LIVES DUE TO ALICE'S DREAMERS.


THERE ARE MYRIAD CASES TO PROVE THAT...
WE CANNOT VIEW ALICE'S DREAM THROUGH ROSE-COLORED GLASSES.
THERE ARE VERY REAL DANGERS ASSOCIATED WITH IT...
AND THEY MUST BE CONTROLLED-- WITH BOTH UNDER-STANDING AND A MEASURE OF FEAR.

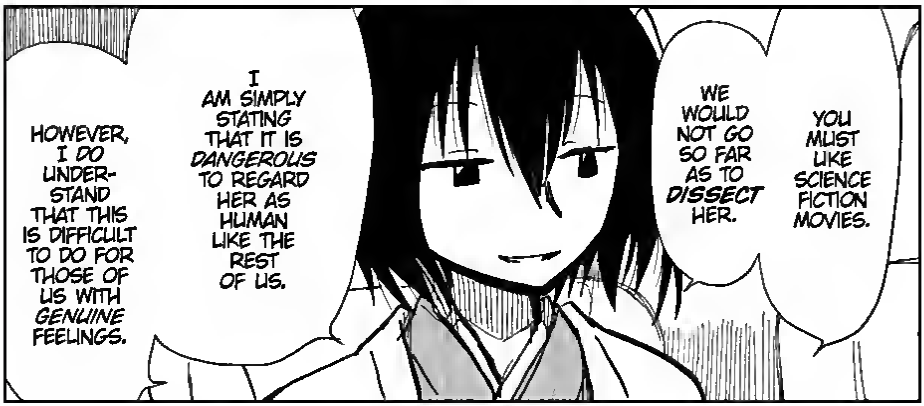

WITH A KNOWN POTENTIAL FOR DESTRUC-TION.

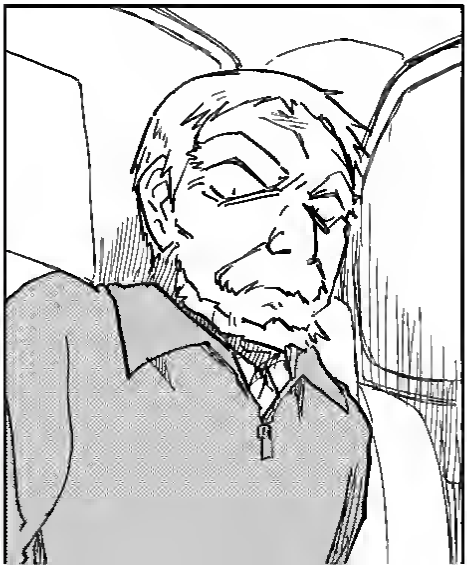
SHE IS A PHENOMENON THAT OVER-REACHES THE LAWS OF PHYSICS AS WE CURRENT-LY KNOW THEM...
THIS IS EVEN MORE TRUE OF THIS ONE, WHO IS CREATED ENTIRELY OF ALICE'S DREAM, AND THE NATURE OF WHOM WE UNDERSTAND SO LITTLE.


SUCH A MONSTER IS ATTEMPTING TO MIMIC US, INFILTRATING OUR SOCIETY.
HEY...!
KASHI-MURA-SAN.
HAVEN'T YOU AND YOUR FAMILY HAD YOUR LIVES ENDANGERED-- JUST IN THE SHORT TIME BETWEEN YESTERDAY AND TODAY?
!
DON'T LISTEN ...
TO WHAT PEOPLE LIKE THIS SAY.
.....


HEE HEE.
YOU'RE GOING TO STUDY HER, SCRUTINIZE HER, DISSECT HER LIKE A ROBOT? IS THAT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING?
YOU'RE GOING TO LOCK THIS KID UP SOMEWHERE FOR THE REST OF HER LIFE.

I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.
BUT I DON'T LIKE IT.


YOU MUST LIKE SCIENCE FICTION MOVIES.
WE WOULD NOT GO SO FAR AS TO DISSECT HER.
I AM SIMPLY STATING THAT IT IS DANGEROUS TO REGARD HER AS HUMAN LIKE THE REST OF US.
HOWEVER, I DO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS DIFFICULT TO DO FOR THOSE OF US WITH GENUINE FEELINGS.



.....
UH...
UMM, YOU KNOW ...
ZORO-KU?

IT'S OKAY.
IT'S PROBABLY *TRUE* THAT I'M A MONSTER AND NOT HUMAN.
I THOUGHT IT WAS WEIRD, YOU KNOW, NOT TO HAVE ANY MEMORIES OR WORDS OR A NAME.
HEY.
I'M A *MON-STER.*
IF YOU SAW WHAT I LOOKED LIKE *BEFORE*, YOU PROBABLY WOULDN'T LIKE ME, ZOROKU.
Y-YOU MIGHT ALREADY HATE ME NOW, ANYWAY. *EHEH HEH HEH.*
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING ELSE THAT...
SNIFF...
HURTS... OR IS SCARY...
AND...
YOU AND SANAE HAVE TO *SUFFER* WHEN I'M WITH YOU...
I HATE THAT *MORE.*

I WANTED TO BE HUMAN, BUT...
IT'S NOT WORTH IT TO MAKE YOU SUFFER.
IF IT'S MADE ME FEEL SO AWFUL, THEN I SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE OUTSIDE AT ALL.
SORRY ABOUT THAT... ZOROKU.
I'M GOING TO GO HOME NOW.
THANK YOU. THE FOOD WAS YUMMY.
ゴGOOOOOO...

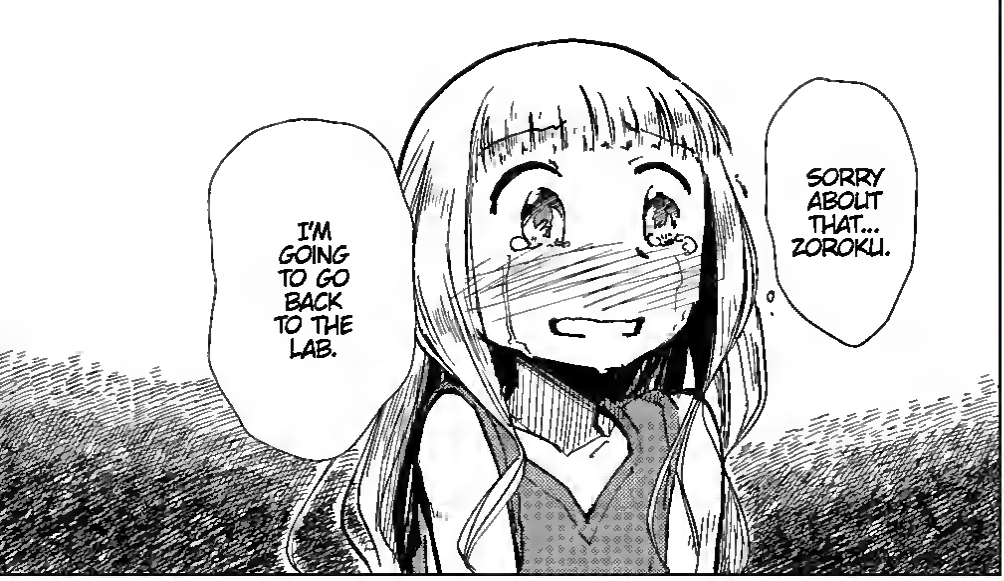
Alice & Zoroku

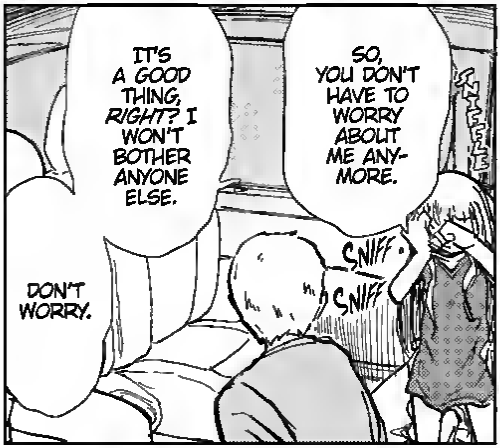
◆

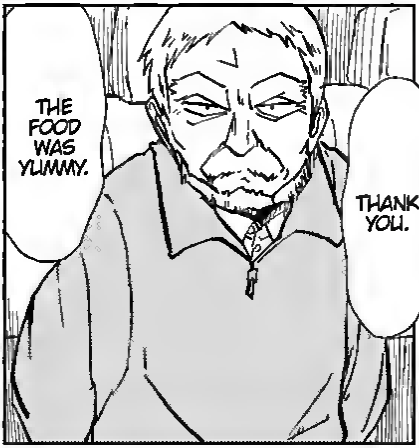
It was like this.

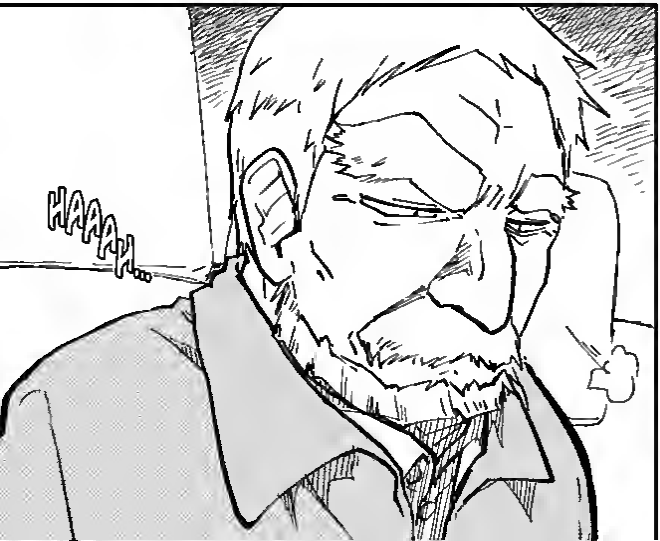
JABBERWOCKY

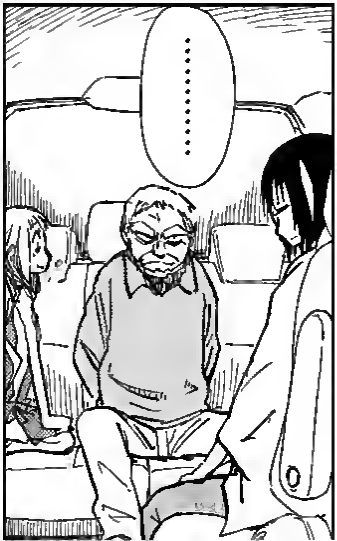
'Twas brillìng, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.


SORRY ABOUT THAT... ZOROKU.
I'M GOING TO GO BACK TO THE LAB.


SO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT ME ANY-MORE.
SNIFF
SNIFF
IT'S A GOOD THING, RIGHT? I WON'T BOTHER ANYONE ELSE.
DON'T WORRY.


THE FOOD WAS YUMMY.
THANK YOU.


HAAAH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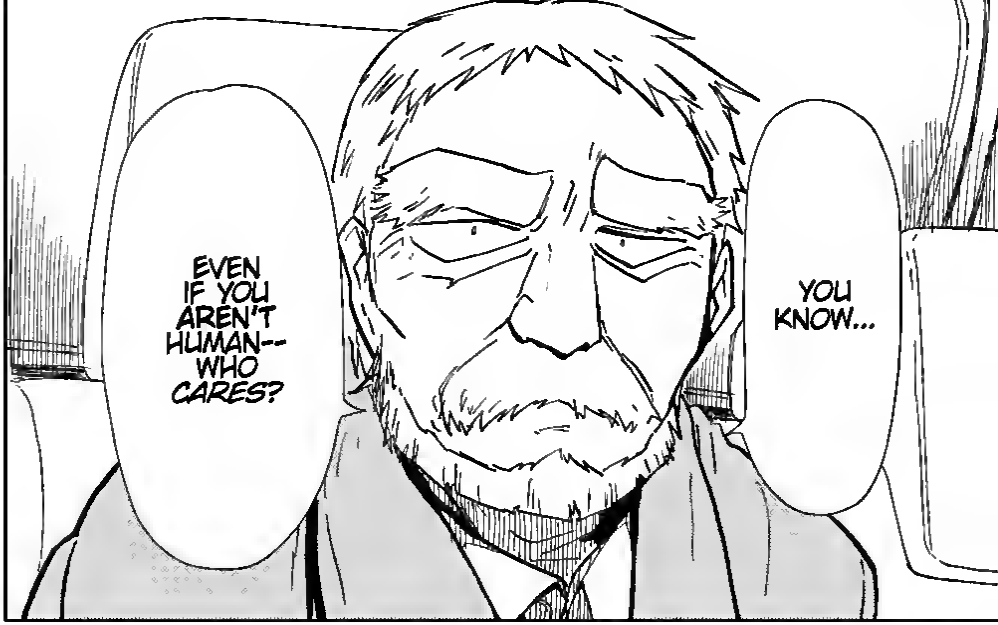
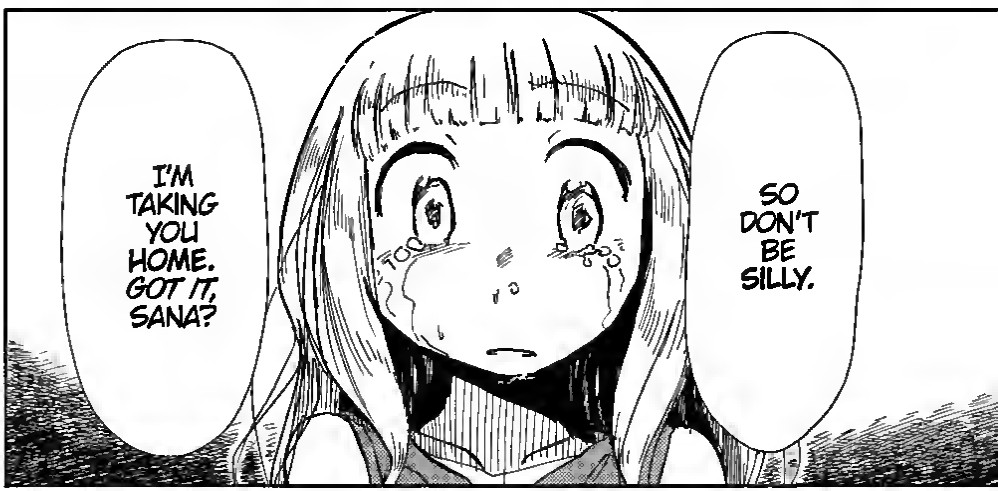

YOU KNOW...
EVEN IF YOU AREN'T HUMAN-- WHO CARES?


SO DON'T BE SILLY.
I'M TAKING YOU HOME. GOT IT, SANA?

Chapter.7
The Dream of the Triangular Room (reprise)

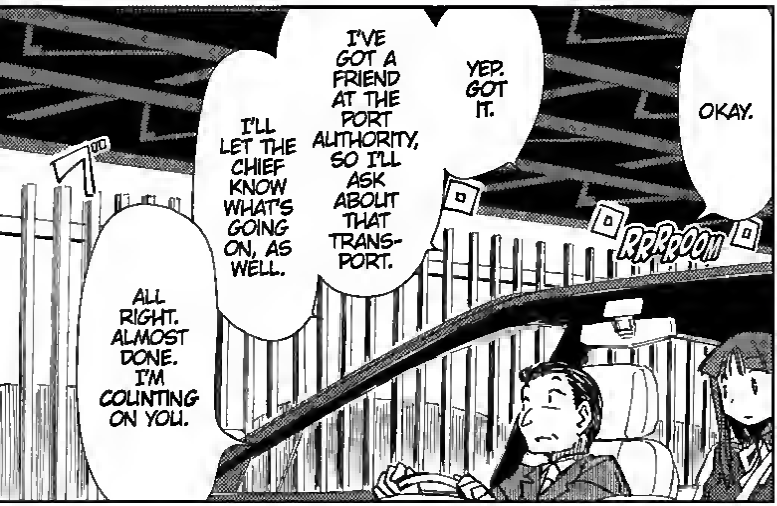
VROO...

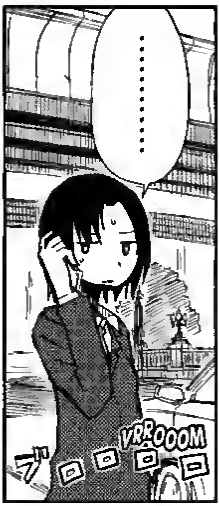
NAITOU-SAN.
THIS IS ICHIJY-OU.
I'M SORRY TO BE LATE, BUT I'VE MANAGED TO DETERMINE THE PAIR'S LOCATION.

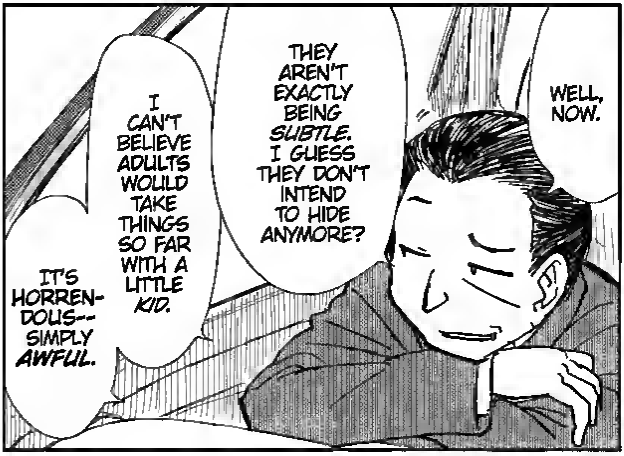
KLACK KLACK
KLACK KLACK
TAKA TAKA TAKA TAKA
HOW-EVER, I BELIEVE THAT WAS A DECOY.
JUST NOW, A TRANS-PORT SHIP LEFT TOKYO BAY.
WE WERE ABLE TO DETECT THEM WHEN SANA-CHAN USED HER POWER TO CALL KASHIMURA-SAN.

VRRRM
GO
WHERE ARE THEY?
OKAY. AH...
ON THE OPEN SEAS.

GRIN

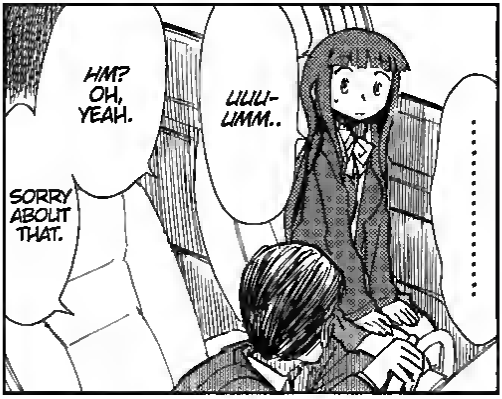

OKAY.
RRRROOM
YEP. GOT IT.
I'VE GOT A FRIEND AT THE PORT AUTHORITY, SO I'LL ASK ABOUT THAT TRANS-PORT.
I'LL LET THE CHIEF KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, AS WELL.
ALL RIGHT. ALMOST DONE. I'M COUNTING ON YOU.


.....
VRROOOM


WELL, NOW.
THEY AREN'T EXACTLY BEING *SUBTLE*. I GUESS THEY DON'T INTEND TO HIDE ANYMORE?
I CAN'T BELIEVE ADULTS WOULD TAKE THINGS SO FAR WITH A LITTLE *KID*.
IT'S HORREN-DOUS-- SIMPLY *AWFUL*.

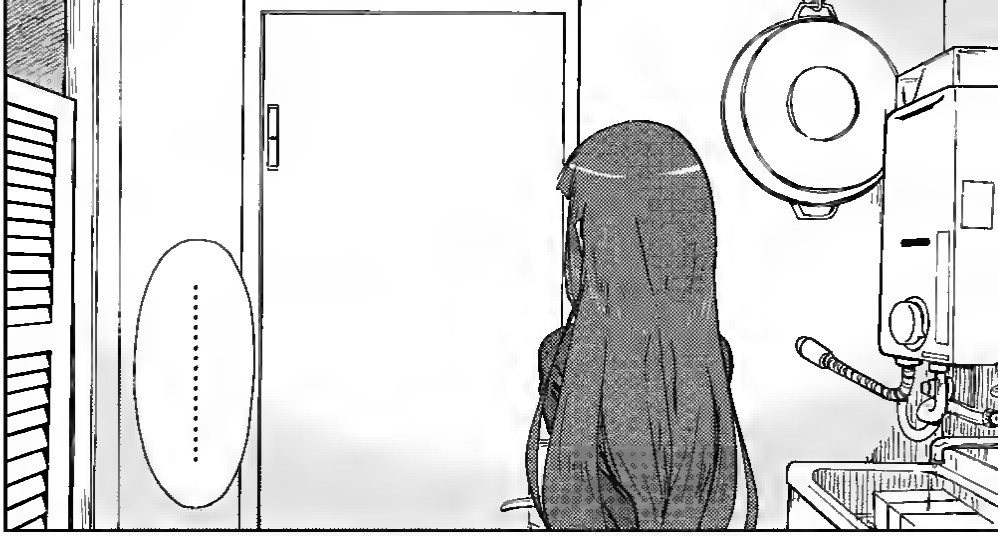
VRN VRN VRN...
SKREE

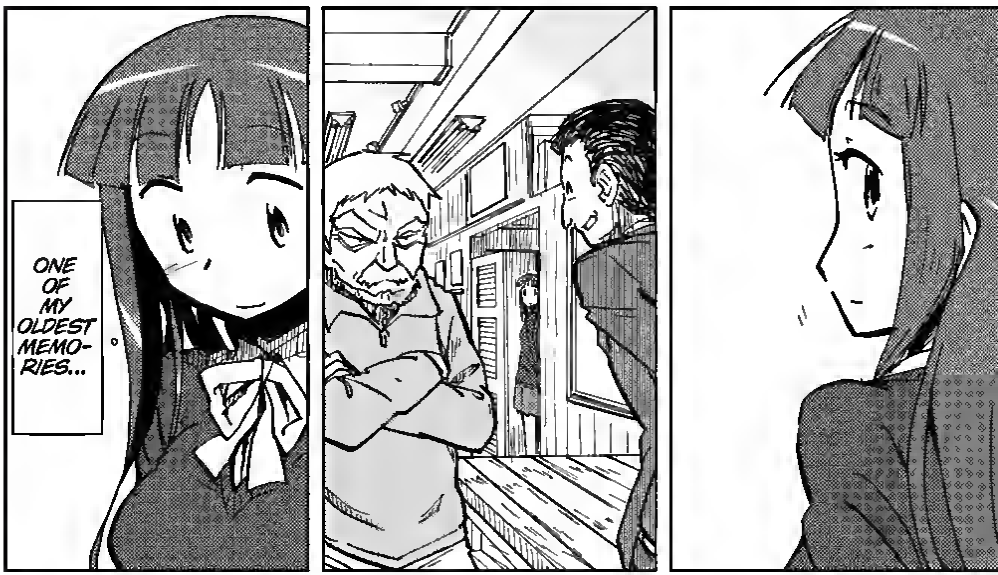
SANA-CHAN AND YOUR GRANDPA JUST UP AND DISAP-PEARED-- OF *COURSE* YOU'RE WORRIED.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. THEY'LL BE HOME SOON.

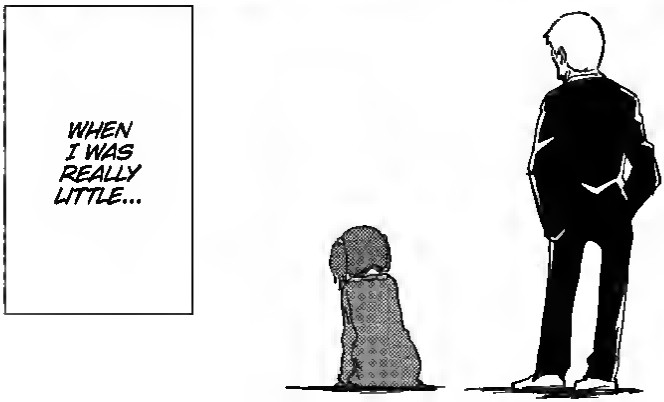

LILLI-LIMM..
HM? OH, YEAH.
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
.....

JUST HANG TIGHT WITH ME FOR A LITTLE LONGER.
WE'LL MEET UP WITH EVERYONE SOON ENOUGH, OKAY?
Y...
Y-YES.
EARLIER ...
.....
THE BATH-ROOM!!
HUH?!
N-NO, IT'S THE TRUTH!
I HAVE TO PEE!
REA-LLY...
IT'S THIS WAA-AY.

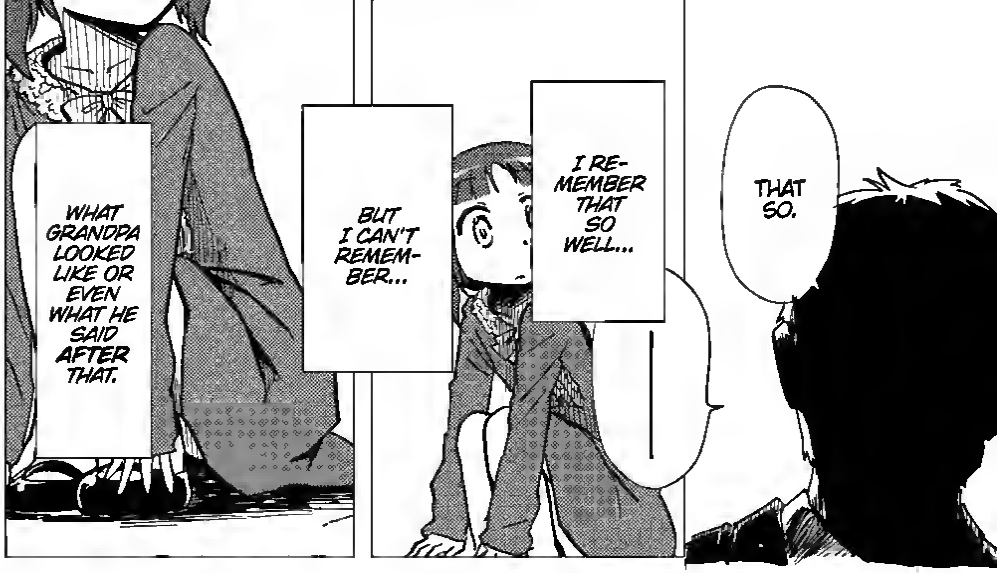
HMM?
OH, YEAH.
WAIT JUUUUST A MINUTE, OKAY?
THERE YOU GO.
KA-CHAK
NGH.
OH-- WAIT, SANA-CHAAAAN...
YOUR HAIR'S SO LONG, IT'S GONNA DRAG IF YOU LEAVE IT DOWN.
CAN YOU GO TO THE BATH-ROOM BY YOUR-SELF?
DON'T INSULT ME!
I CAN DO ANY-THING, YOU KNOW!
OKAYYY!
YOU'RE GOOD NOW.

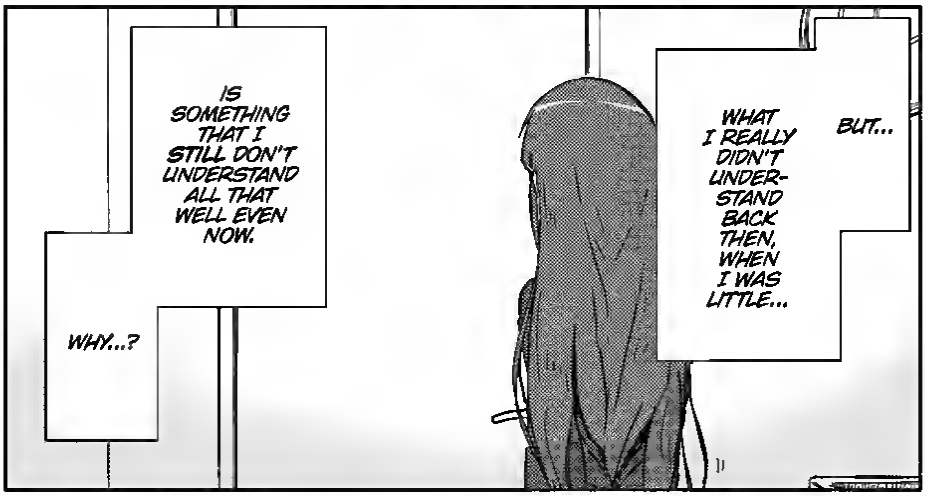


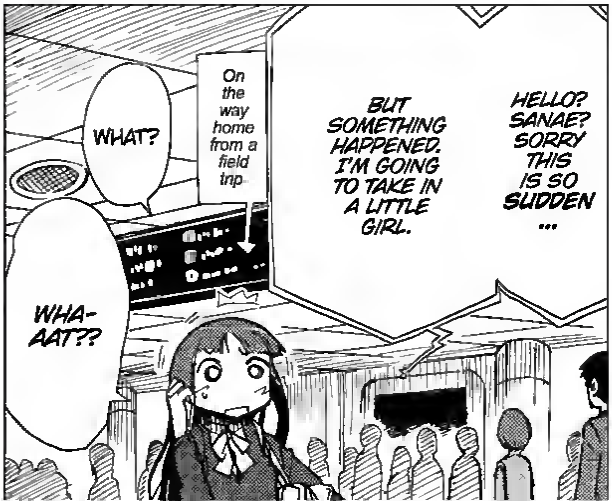

ONE OF MY OLDEST MEMO-RIES...


WHEN I WAS REALLY LITTLE...
FROM A LONG TIME AGO...

THE FIELD AT MY KINDER-GARTEN, THE ROAD IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE... THAT WAS THE KIND OF CHILD I WAS.
I WOULD MAKE THESE MOUNDS OF DIRT... IN ALL KINDS OF PLACES.
I, LIM...
A GRAVE.
WHAT ARE YOU MAKING?
SANAE?
HMM.
WHOSE?
THIS ONE'S FOR...A FISHIE.
THIS ONE'S FOR...
A LADY-BUG.
THIS ONE'S FOR...
PAPA AND...
MAMA.


THAT SO.
I RE-MEMBER THAT SO WELL...
BUT I CAN'T REMEM-BER...
WHAT GRANDPA LOOKED LIKE OR EVEN WHAT HE SAID AFTER THAT.


BUT...
WHAT I REALLY DIDN'T UNDER-STAND BACK THEN, WHEN I WAS LITTLE...
IS SOMETHING THAT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND ALL THAT WELL EVEN NOW.
WHY...?


On the way home from a field trip
WHAT?
WHA-AAT??
BUT SOMETHING HAPPENED. I'M GOING TO TAKE IN A LITTLE GIRL.
HELLO? SANAE? SORRY THIS IS SO SUDDEN ...

WHEN HE TOLD ME, OUT OF THE BLUE, THAT OUR FAMILY MIGHT BECOME LARGER...
I WOULD FEEL SOME-THING VERY, VERY STRANGE.

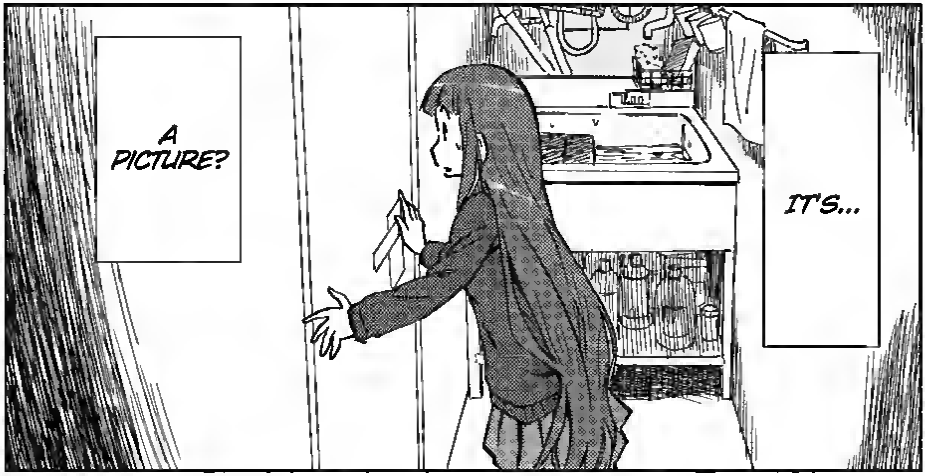
?
?
I'M SORRY TO ASK, BUT I THINK SHE'LL BE HUNGRY-- DO YOU THINK YOU COULD FEED HER SOMETHING? TAKE CARE OF HER?
SHE'LL BE SLEEPING IN THE ROOM UPSTAIRS WHEN YOU GET HOME.
HUH? WAIT!
WHAT?? WHA-AAA-AAT~?!
?!
?
?
?
?
?

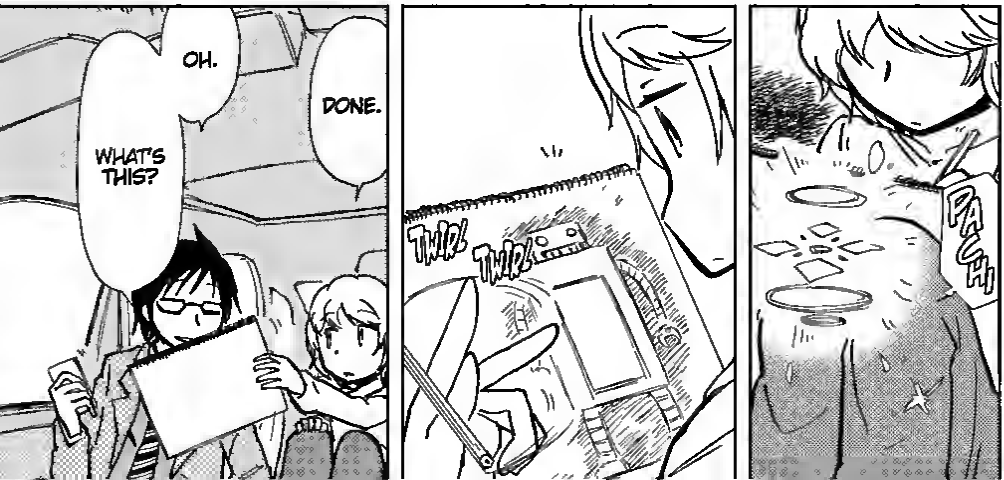
Zzz...
Zzzz...
!
WOWWW!
WOW, WOW! HERE SHE IS!!
SHE'S SUCH A PRETTY LITTLE GIRL! I WONDER IF SHE'S FROM AROUND HERE?
Zz
PACHI
?!
KIIII
Zzz...
Zzz...

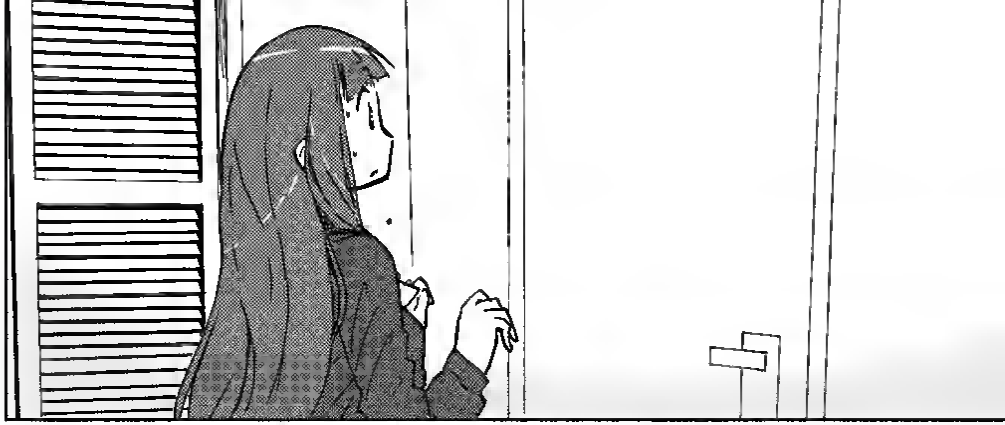
GYUUU
IT WAS THEN...
THAT I REALIZED THAT THIS WAS A VERY STRANGE CHILD.
IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I HAD EVER WANDERED INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S DREAM.
AND IT WAS SO BEAUTI-FUL!!!

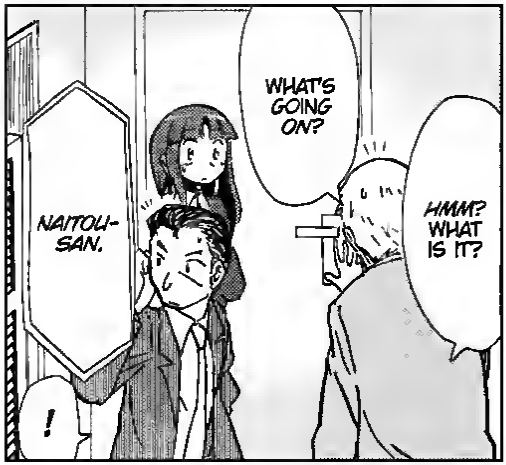
SLUMP
ZZZ
ZZZ
PACHI!
!
.....
ZZZ
ZZZ
SANA-CHAAAN, YOU'VE BEEN IN THERE FOR A WHILE. IS EVERY-THING OKAYYY?
KNOCK
KNOCK
SANA-CHAN~?
FWU~
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK

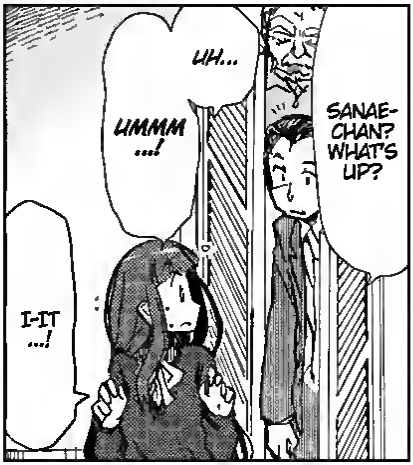
SANA-CHAN?
TAP TAP
SANA-CHAN, IS SOME-THING...?

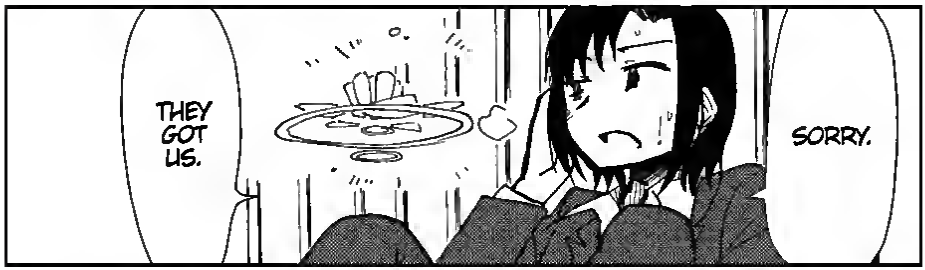

IT'S...
A PICTURE?


DONE.
OH.
WHAT'S THIS?
TWIRL
TWIRL
PACH




WHAT'S GOING ON?
HMM? WHAT IS IT?
NAITOU-SAN.
!


UH...
UMMM ...!
SANAE-CHAN? WHAT'S UP?
I-IT ...!


THEY GOT US.
SORRY.

THEY MOVED THE BATHROOM TO A DIFFERENT BUILDING.
I'M ON TOP OF A BUILDING ABOUT THREE BLOCKS AWAY.

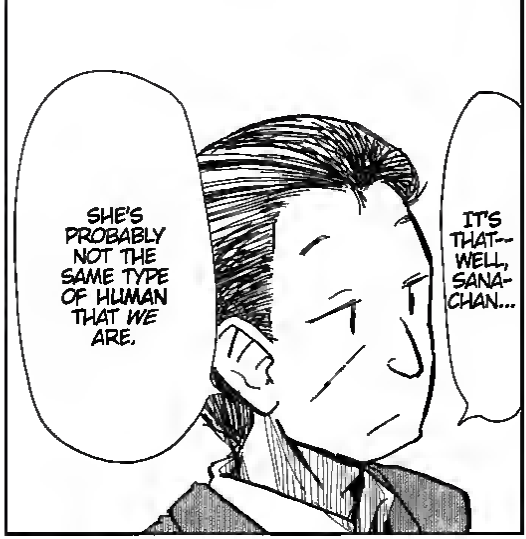
ゴゴゴゴゴ
"RHINOCEROS BEETLE" HAS CAPTURED "ALICE."
CON-DUCTOR TO ALL CARS.
THE "PASSENGER CAR" IS NOW EN ROUTE.

THIS WAS ALL THAT WAS LEFT AT THE SITE.
IT LOOKS LIKE SHE REALLY WAS GOING TO THE BATHROOM WHEN THEY TOOK HER.
THEY DIDN'T EVEN LET HER PULL UP HER UNDER-WEAR.
MY SOUL, WHICH HAD BEEN SO HAPPY...
IT FELT LIKE SOMEONE HAD THROWN COLD WATER OVER IT.
SORRY... I LET MY GUARD DOWN.
I HAD PEOPLE STATIONED AROUND THE HOUSE, BUT...
.....
THE INSTANT YOU ARRIVED, THEY STRUCK.
!

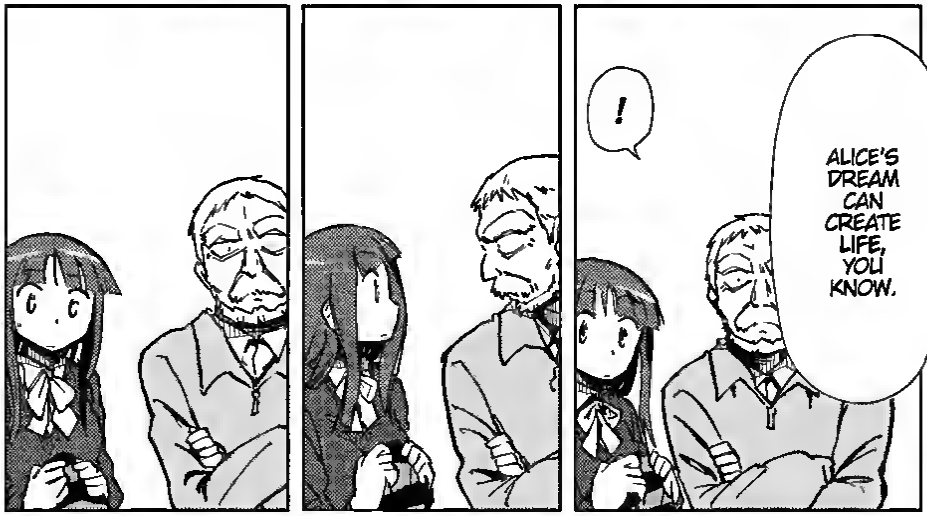
BECAUSE I...
I BROUGHT SANA-CHAN HERE...?
IS IT...
WHAT ...?
CALM DOWN, SANAE.
B--
BUT...!
IT'S ALL RIGHT. CALM DOWN. IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
ICHI-JYOU-KUN'S ALREADY GONE AFTER THEM.
I KNOW IT'S NOT MUCH CONSOLATION, BUT SANA-CHAN'S VERY IMPORTANT TO THEM.
THEY WON'T DO ANYTHING TO HARM HER-- AT LEAST, NOT RIGHT AWAY.
B...
BUT THAT'S --!

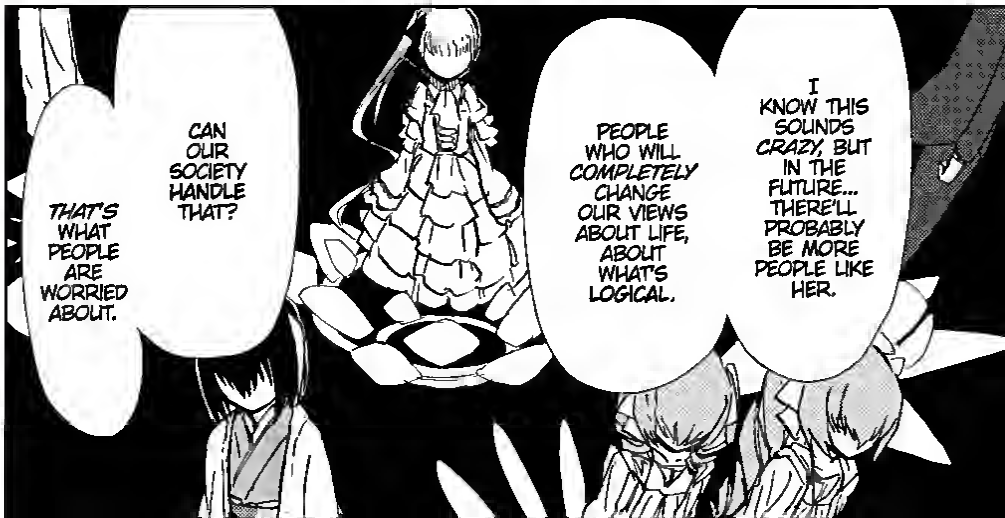
SANAE.
EVERY-THING'S ALL RIGHT.
IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN. NO ONE ELSE WILL GO MISSING.
.....!
DON'T WORRY.
YOU REST HERE FOR A WHILE.
OR DO YOU WANT TO GO BACK HOME?
I'LL....
I'LL STAY HERE...
THANK YOU...
IT LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOTTEN YOU MIXED UP IN QUITE THE SITUATION. SORRY ABOUT THAT.
THINGS WERE SUPPOSED TO GO A BIT MORE SMOOTHLY, YOU KNOW?
HEY.

WHAT KIND OF KID IS SHE, ANY-WAY?
SHE'S GOT SOME STRANGE PSYCHIC POWERS, BUT SHE'S STILL JUST A LITTLE GIRL, RIGHT?
I TOLD YOU I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT HER SITUATION. SHE'S BEEN A VICTIM OF SOME KIND OF ABUSE.
BUT IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT BIGGER PLANS?
NATIO-NAL SEC-RET.
KIDDING! JUST KIDDING!
THAT WAS JUST A JOKE.
THIS IS... IT'S SOME-THING LIKE A TUG OF WAR.
THE GOVERNMENT CAN'T AGREE ON HOW TO HANDLE IT, AND THERE ARE TWO FACTIONS--BOTH WITH THEIR OWN AGENDAS...
HAVING TOLD YOU THAT MUCH, I GUESS I CAN SAY THAT I WORK FOR ONE OF THOSE FACTIONS.


SHE'S PROBABLY NOT THE SAME TYPE OF HUMAN THAT WE ARE.
IT'S THAT-- WELL, SANA-CHAN...

TO BE HONEST, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'LL BELIEVE ME.
WELL...
AND THOSE ARE...?

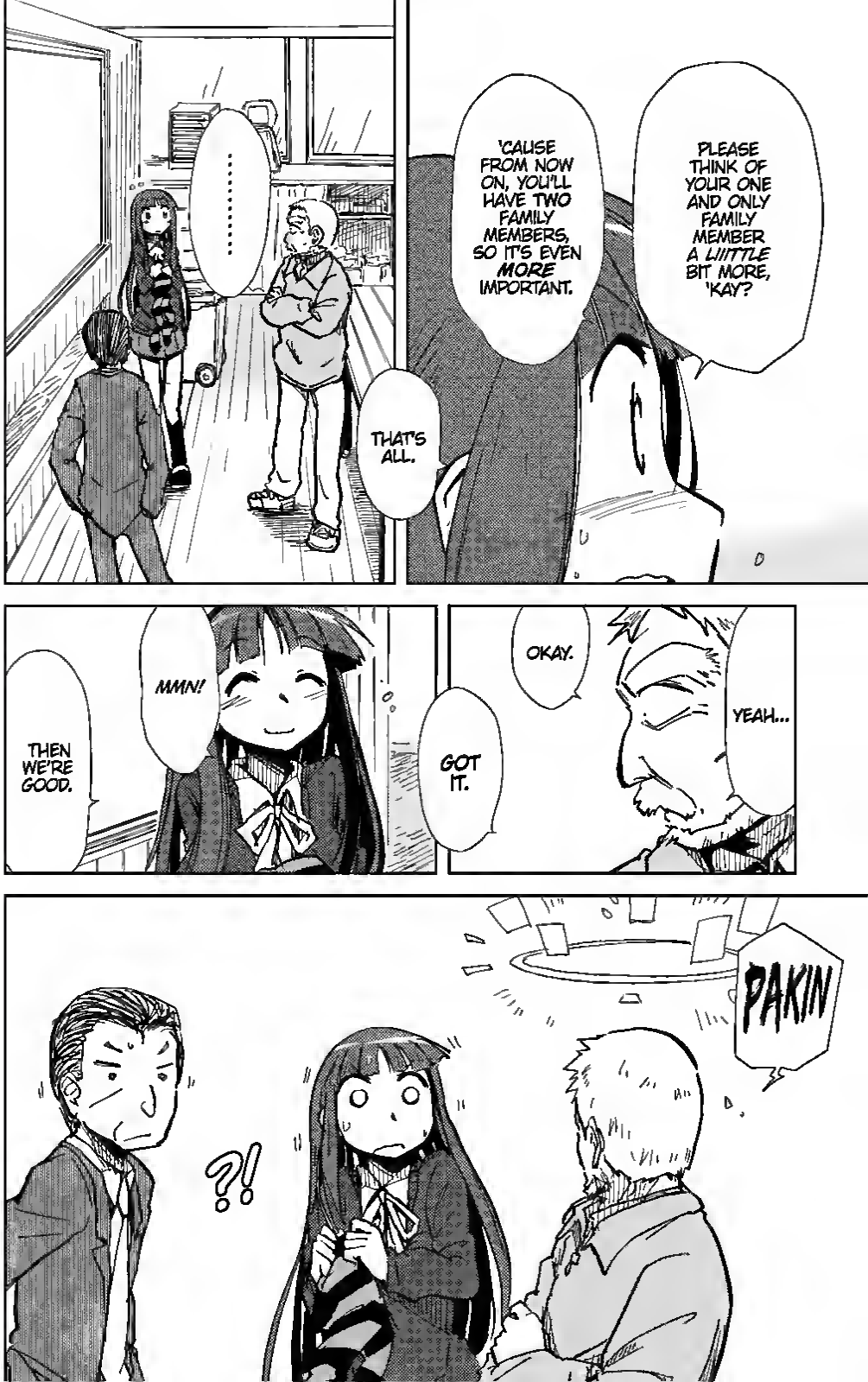

ALICE'S DREAM CAN CREATE LIFE, YOU KNOW.
!


I KNOW THIS SOUNDS CRAZY, BUT IN THE FUTURE... THERE'LL PROBABLY BE MORE PEOPLE LIKE HER.
PEOPLE WHO WILL COMPLETELY CHANGE OUR VIEWS ABOUT LIFE, ABOUT WHAT'S LOGICAL.
CAN OUR SOCIETY HANDLE THAT?
THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE ARE WORRIED ABOUT.

WE--I THINK THAT IT'S ENTIRELY POSSIBLE.
BUT, WELL, IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL THIS...
I GET WORD THAT THE LITTLE GIRL I WAS SUPPOSED TO KEEP MY EYE ON HAS ESCAPED FROM THE OTHER FACTION AND ENDED UP AT YOUR PLACE...
AND WELL, I THOUGHT, MAYBE I'D BE ABLE TO USE THIS TO MY ADVANTAGE, YOU KNOW?
"USE," HMM?
RIGHT.
YOU AND...
SANA-CHAN...
WE'D BE ABLE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS WITH HER LIVING IN SOCIETY... AND, WELL, I GUESS I GOT A LITTLE AHEAD OF MYSELF...
THE TRUTH IS, I WAS GOING TO HAVE HER MEET MY BOSS, TOO.
.....
YOU--
YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE KIND OF IDIOT WHO NEVER THINKS ABOUT HOW OTHER PEOPLE MIGHT BE AFFECTED BY YOUR HARE-BRAINED PLANS.

.....
SORRY ABOUT THAT.
HMPH!
I'LL GIVE YOU AN EARFUL *AFTER* THE KID COMES BACK, SAFE AND SOUND.
!
SANAE.
IF SANA COMES BACK...
WILL YOU BE ABLE TO GET ALONG WITH HER?
YES.
.....

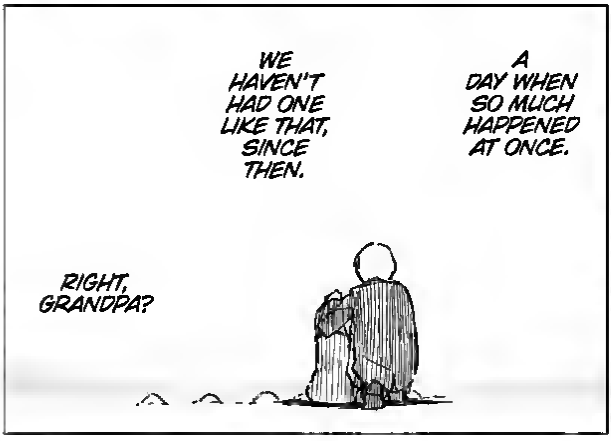
YOU ALWAYS MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT EVERYTHING BY YOURSELF, AND--I DON'T THINK THAT'S A GOOD IDEA!
GRANDPA, YOUUU...!
B...
BUT...
W-WELL, IT'S OKAY NOOOW, BUT...
I WAS REEEALLY SURPRISED, AND...
WHEN I HEARD THAT SANA-CHAN WAS SLEEPING AT OUR HOUSE...
BUT I THINK YOU DO TEND TO DO THAT, GRANDPA...!

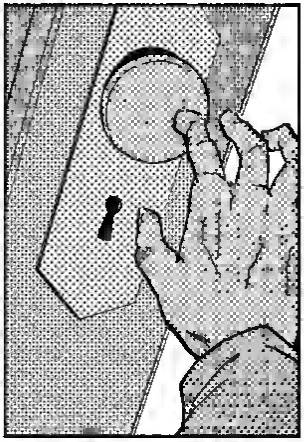

PLEASE THINK OF YOUR ONE AND ONLY FAMILY MEMBER A L///TTLE BIT MORE, 'KAY?
'CAUSE FROM NOW ON, YOU'LL HAVE TWO FAMILY MEMBERS, SO IT'S EVEN MORE IMPORTANT.
THAT'S ALL.
.....
YEAH...
OKAY.
GOT IT.
MMN!
THEN WE'RE GOOD.
PAKIN
?!

WHA-AAT?!
DO YOU HEAR THAT?
IT'S NOT JUST THE SOUND, OLD MAN. LOOK UP!
HEY...
H-HUH...?
WHAT'S THIS?
?!
KIIIII
SHE'S CALLING ...
SANA-CHAN...

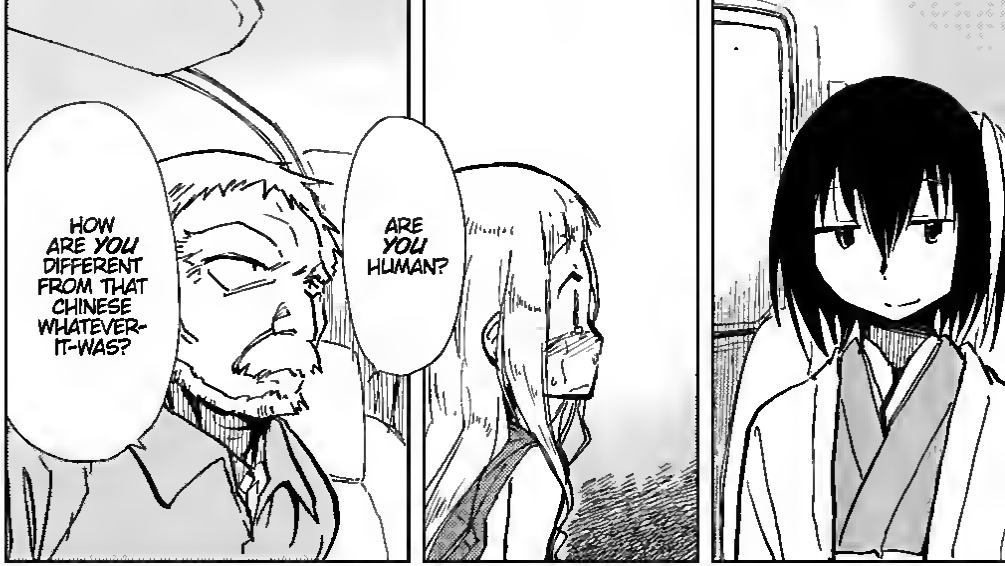
GRANDPA...
YOU HAVE TO SAAAVE SANA-CHAN!
HUH?
?
HOW AM I--?
!!

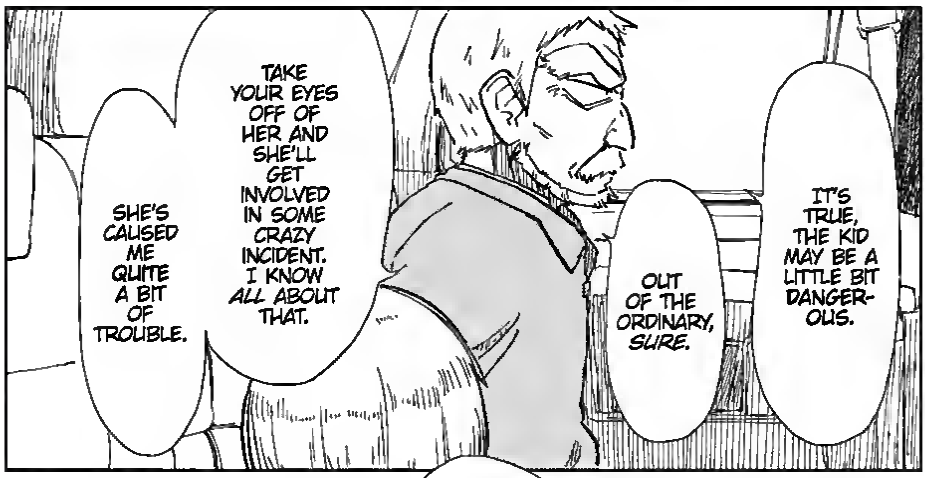
THE SAME THING YOU TOLD LITTLE ME THAT DAY, THAT WOULD BE ENOUGH.
I THINK IF YOU TELL HER...
RANGE
IT'S PROBABLY A SIMPLE THING.

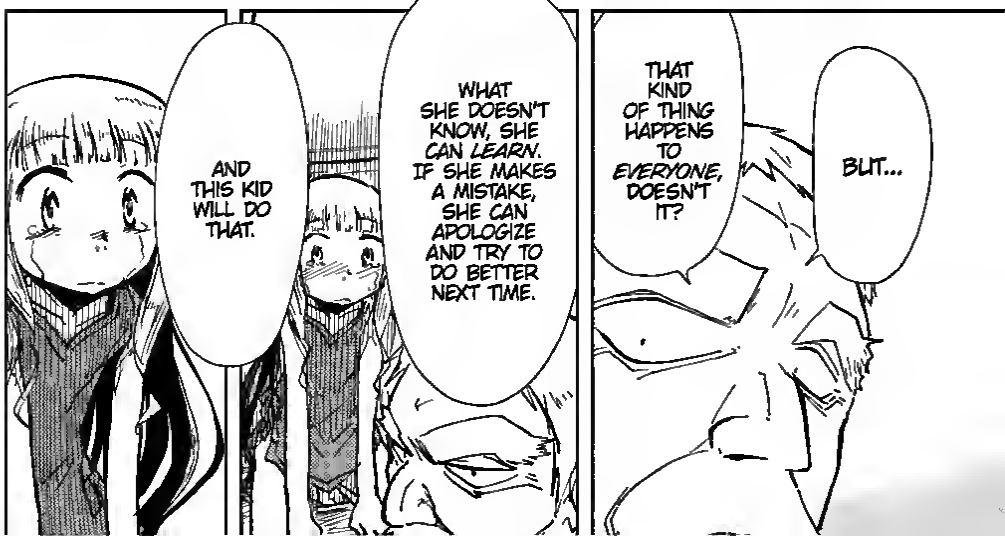

WE HAVEN'T HAD ONE LIKE THAT, SINCE THEN.
A DAY WHEN SO MUCH HAPPENED AT ONCE.
RIGHT, GRANDPA?

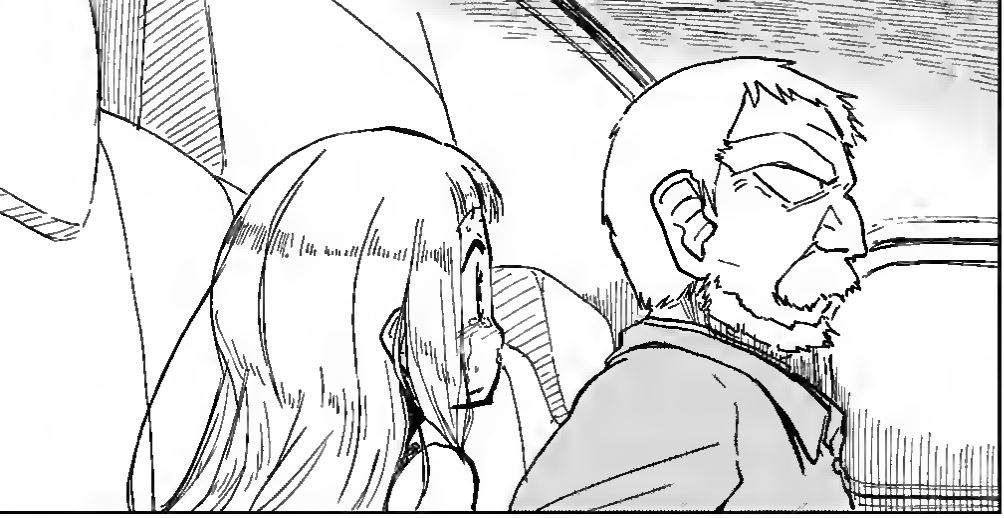


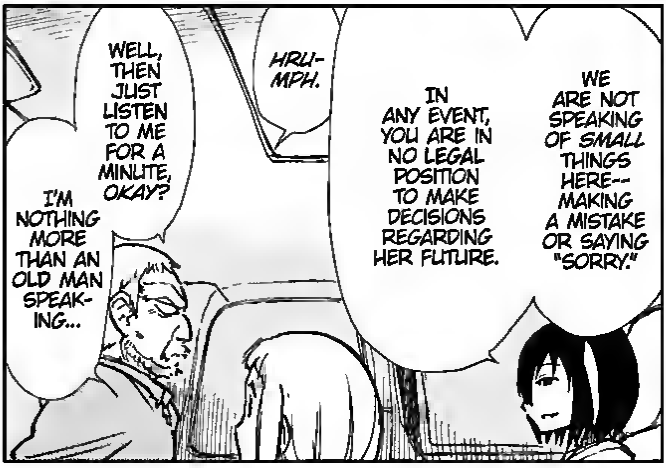
I'LL ASK YOU THIS: WHAT IS HUMAN?
AND YOU SAID THIS KID'S NOT HUMAN, SO...
YOU SAID YOUR NAME WAS MIRIAM OR SOME-THING?


HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM THAT CHINESE WHATEVER-IT-WAS?
ARE YOU HUMAN?

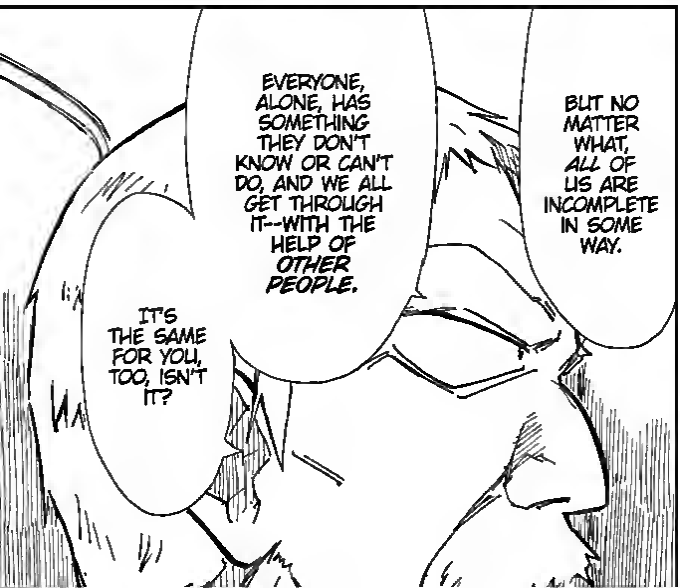

SHE'S CAUSED ME QUITE A BIT OF TROUBLE.
TAKE YOUR EYES OFF OF HER AND SHE'LL GET INVOLVED IN SOME CRAZY INCIDENT. I KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT.
OUT OF THE ORDINARY, SURE.
IT'S TRUE, THE KID MAY BE A LITTLE BIT DANGER-OUS.

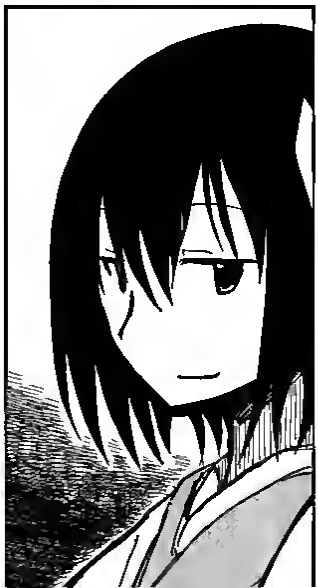

AND THIS KID WILL DO THAT.
WHAT SHE DOESN'T KNOW, SHE CAN LEARN. IF SHE MAKES A MISTAKE, SHE CAN APOLOGIZE AND TRY TO DO BETTER NEXT TIME.
THAT KIND OF THING HAPPENS TO EVERYONE, DOESN'T IT?
BUT...

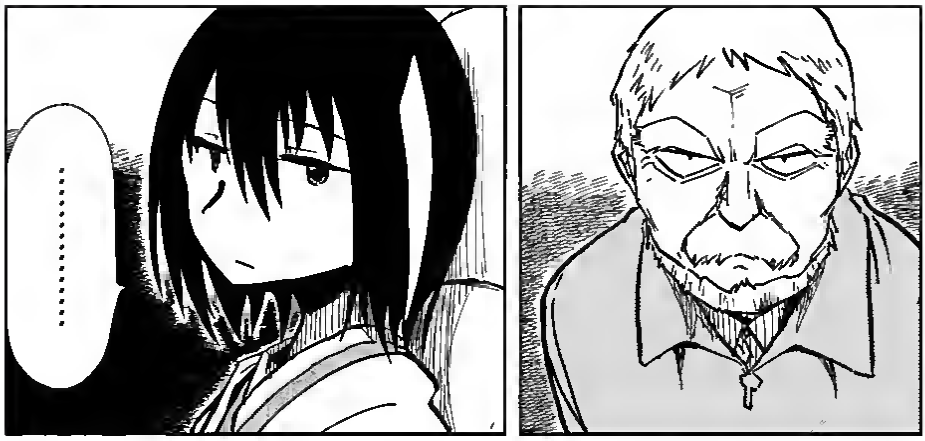



HRU-MPH.
IN ANY EVENT, YOU ARE IN NO LEGAL POSITION TO MAKE DECISIONS REGARDING HER FUTURE.
WE ARE NOT SPEAKING OF SMALL THINGS HERE--MAKING A MISTAKE OR SAYING "SORRY."
WELL, THEN JUST LISTEN TO ME FOR A MINUTE, OKAY?
I'M NOTHING MORE THAN AN OLD MAN SPEAK-ING...

I NEVER EXPECTED YOU TO UNDER-STAND THIS.


EVERYONE, ALONE, HAS SOMETHING THEY DON'T KNOW OR CAN'T DO, AND WE ALL GET THROUGH IT--WITH THE HELP OF OTHER PEOPLE.
BUT NO MATTER WHAT, ALL OF US ARE INCOMPLETE IN SOME WAY.
IT'S THE SAME FOR YOU, TOO, ISN'T IT?




.....

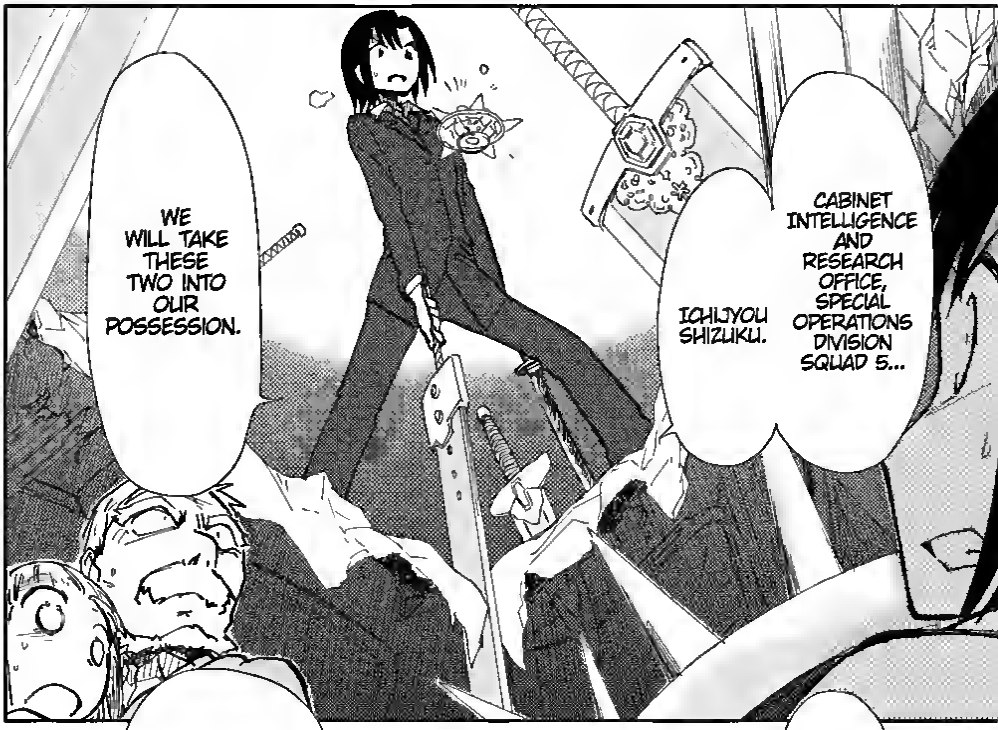
IF NOTHING ELSE...
THAT KID HAS A SOUL.
SHE FEELS HAPPY WHEN SHE EATS SOME-THING GOOD...
SHE'S NOT GREAT AT EXPRESSING HOW SHE FEELS, BUT SHE TRIES TO BE MINDFUL OF OTHERS AND FIGURE OUT HOW THEY'RE FEELING.

AND EVEN IF SHE COULDN'T DO THAT...
AT THE VERY LEAST, THIS KID...
SHE'S NEVER INTENTIONALLY DONE ANYTHING TO HARM ME.
IF...
IF THIS KID WERE LIKE YOU SAY SHE IS...
IF SHE WERE BORN FROM SOMETHING OTHER THAN A HUMAN MOTHER, IF SHE'S SOME KIND OF ALIEN THING...
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S A PROBLEM?
CAN YOU REALLY NOT GET ALONG WITH HER?
THAT'S A VERY JAPANESE POINT OF VIEW, ISN'T IT?
ONE THAT MAY ALSO BRING STRIFE.
UM...
HEY... ZORO-KU?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? ARE YOU BEING STUPID?
I'M A MONSTER, YOU KNOW! I'M A LOT OF TROUBLE FOR EVERYONE!

SO WHAT?
DON'T ACT TOUGH.
IF THINGS ARE HARD, THEN YOU SHOULD BE WITH OTHER PEOPLE.
AT THE VERY LEAST...
THERE'S NO REASON FOR YOU TO STAY WITH PEOPLE WHO TREAT YOU LIKE THIS.
YOU LEFT BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO SEE WHAT WAS OUTSIDE, RIGHT?
SO DO IT. SEE THINGS THROUGH.
YOU KNOW...
I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE DON'T DO THE RIGHT THING.
SNIFF SNIFF!
SNURF!
MNH!

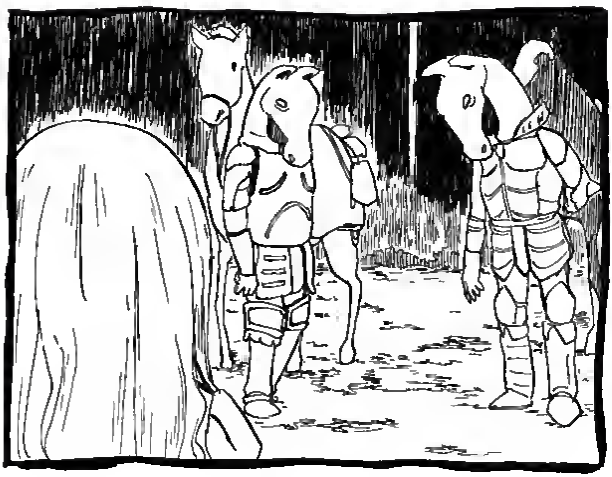
ARE...
ARE YOU STUPID OR SOME-THING?!
I'M NOT TRYING TO ACT TOUGH!
IS THAT SO?
MY APOLOGIES FOR MY LATE ARRIVAL...
!
PACHI
I HAVE COME TO RESCUE...
BOTH OF YOU!
!!
?!
THUH-THOOON
WHA--?!

I SEE I DON'T HAVE TO REIGN IN MY POWERS HERE.
THE SECURITY UNIT OUTSIDE HAS ALREADY BEEN RENDERED HELPLESS.
HYUU!
I SUGGEST YOU RETREAT.
ZORO-KU--!
SUSH!


CABINET INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH OFFICE, SPECIAL OPERATIONS DIVISION SQUAD 5...
ICHIJYOU SHIZUKU.
WE WILL TAKE THESE TWO INTO OUR POSSESSION.

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
PACH!
I WILL DO MY BEST TO REPAY YOU FOR MAKING A FOOL OF ME EARLIER...
FORMER CAPTAIN MINNIE C. TACHIBANA.

Alice & Zoroku



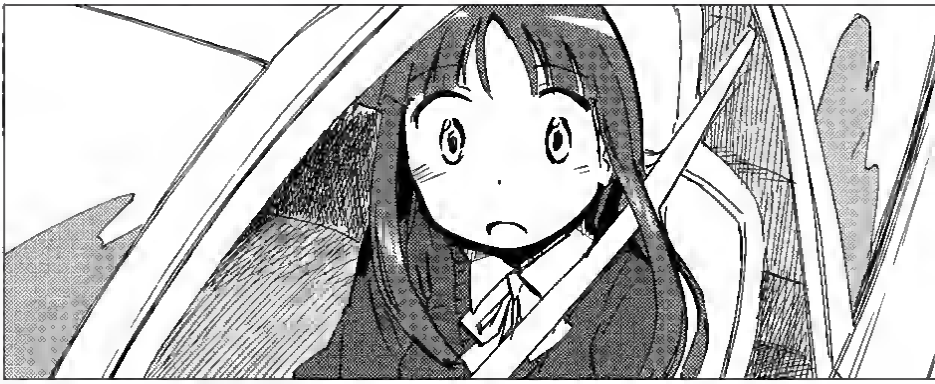
◆

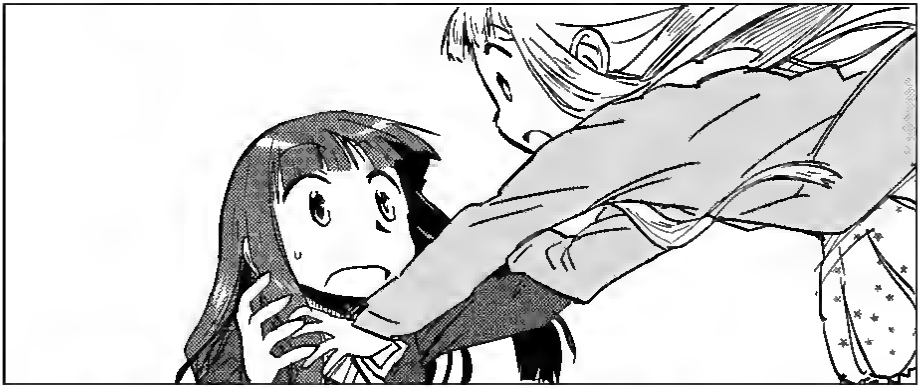
"She's *my* prisoner, you know!"
the Red Knight said at last.

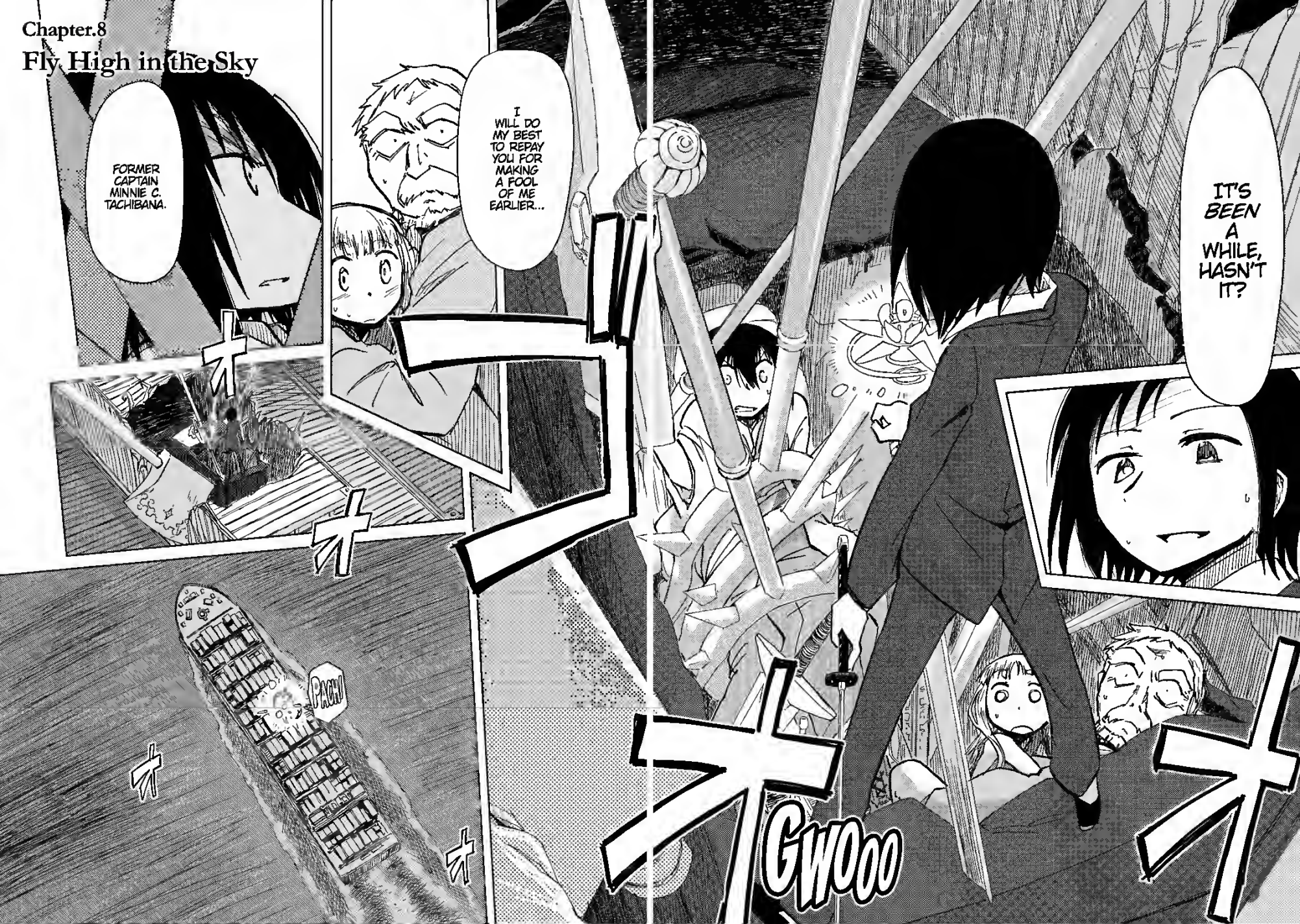
"Yes, but then *I* came and rescued her!"
the White Knight replied.

TODAY...

OUR FAMILY GREW BY ONE.






Chapter.8
Fly High in the Sky
FORMER CAPTAIN MINNIE C. TACHIBANA.
I WILL DO MY BEST TO REPAY YOU FOR MAKING A FOOL OF ME EARLIER...
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
PACK!
GWOOO

IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
GWOOO

Chapter.8
Fly High in the Sky

KIN
KUUN
!!
TAK
BANG
BANG
BANG
TAK
TAK
?!
HOW IN THE...
SHE FLEW?!
PACH
?!
GRRR
MUR-PHF!
I CAN'T LET YOU HAVE HER!
BANG
BANG
ACK!
WAH ...!
SWOOM

BANG
KANG
KANG
LAST...
MY...
THE "RED QUEEN" IS...
BANG
CHOOM
IF ALL OF HUMANITY COULD HAVE SUCH POWER AT OUR DISPOSAL, THEN...
CAN MAKE ANY WISH INTO REALITY.
AS LONG AS SHE CAN IMAGINE IT, THE "RED QUEEN"...
.....
THUUN
EVEN IF IT'S A MON-STER!!
EVEN IF...
FOR IN-STANCE ...
WHAT WAS YOUR CARD AGAIN?
CHOOM
OPERA-TION...
BANG

GASHANK
.....?
KIIIN
3-1.
BACHI
!!!
JYAKI
NUMBER 590.
TAK
JYAKI
NUMBER 51! OPERATION 1.8!!
WHAT IS THIS LIGHT ...?
WHA...?

B-BLAM!
B-BLAM!
?!
JYAKI
AAAH!
KA-THUNK
SQUAT
!!
BACHI
SHRUP
SHRUUP
?!
WRAP
EEK!
THISSH
WHO-OOA-AAA ?!!
SHU RUU

GASHU
NUMBER 14.
PACHI
FWUMP
CLOP
DUH-
DWOOM
!!!
BRUOOO
ZUUUN
GWOOOOO
THIS WILL PROBABLY KEEP THEM OCCUPIED... FOR NOW.
ARE EITHER OF YOU INJURED?

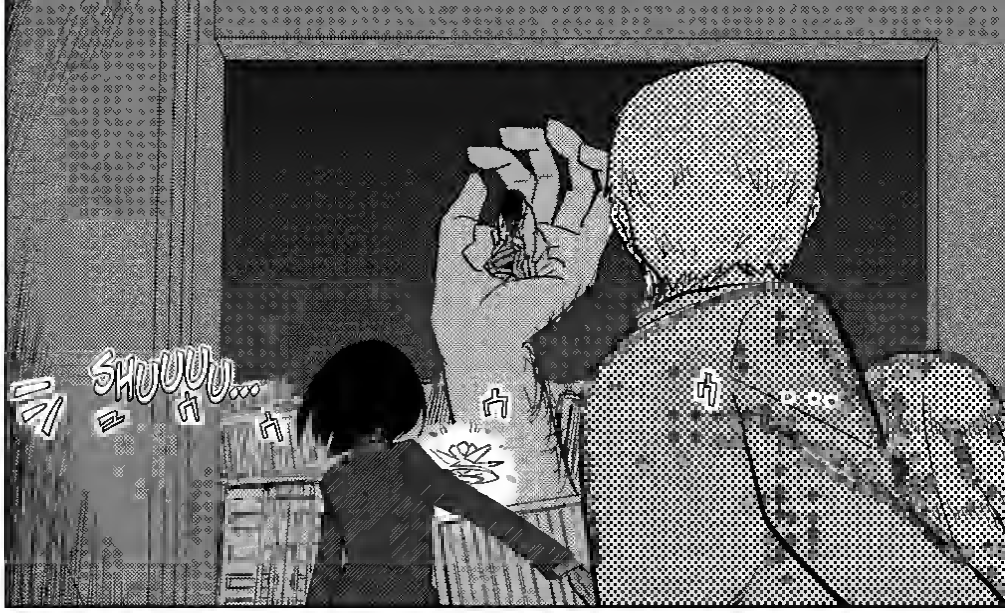
KIIIIIIIN
TEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE HEE!
BATA BATA BATA BATA
HEE HEE HEE.
HEE.
BATA BATA BATA BATA BATA
SO, SO COOL!! OOH, I WISH I COULD'VE SEEN YOU LIVE AND IN PERSON, SENPAI!!!!
THAT WAS LOUD, YAMADA.
WHOOOOOOAAAAAA!! THAT WAS AWESOME, ICHIJYOU-SENPAI!!!
ONLY "RHINOCEROS BEETLE"-SAN'S LOOKING-GLASS IS STILL ACTIVE. BE CAREFUL.
AS FOR THE REST, THE CHIEF IS NEGOTIATING.
WE HAVE COMPLETE CONTROL OVER THE SHIP'S INTERIOR.
SURROUNDING ENVIRON STATUS?
ENOUGH.
KI!!!!
FSOAR.....
MY APOLOGIES.
SLEEP
SLEEP
THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT SANA-CHAN'S POWERS, SO THEY HAD READIED QUITE A FEW ALTERNATE CONVOY ROUTES. IT TOOK SOME TIME TO IDENTIFY THE CORRECT ONE.
WE ARE ON BOARD A SHIP.
BATA BATA BATA BATA
AND THIS IS...?

YOU--!! ACCORDING TO YAMADA NORIKO'S SPECIAL WIDE-EARTH ICHIJYOU-SENPAI DETECTION SYSTEM REVISION--
THAT'S UNNECESSARY.
RIGHT NOW, THE ONLY ALICE'S DREAMERS IN THE VICINITY ARE YOU, SENPAI--AND RHINOCEROS BEETLE-SAN.
I'LL KNOW IMMEDIATELY IF A LOOKING-GLASS IS ACTIVATED NEARBY.
LEAVE IT TO ME!
BATA BATA BATA
THE LOUD ONE IS YAMADA.
SHE'S IN CHARGE OF ENGINEERING FOR OUR TEAM.
GRROOOOOOO
I DON'T REALLY UNDERSTAND IT MYSELF, BUT USING DATA FROM SATELLITES AND CELLULAR PHONE TOWERS...
SHE CAN TRACK THE LOCATION OF ALICE'S DREAM.

WHRROOOO
IT STARTED AS A STALKING TOOL, TO TELL THE TRUTH.
"STALKING"...?
YOU WOULD ALWAYS ARRIVE JUST BEFORE ME AT PLACES I HADN'T EVEN TOLD YOU I WAS GOING TO. AT FIRST, I THOUGHT YOU MUST BE A SPY.
HOW RUDE!
CALL ME A GOOD FRIEND--OR A FAN, AT THE VERY LEAST...
AS A HACKER, SHE'S ONE OF THE BEST...
BUT, WELL--YOU SEE WHAT I MEAN, RIGHT?
I CAN'T GET THE SYSTEM TO DETECT ANYONE BESIDES SENPAI.
ROOOO
I'M SORRY.
SANA-CHAN...
I'M SORRY YOU'VE HAD TO SUFFER THOUGH SUCH A TERRIFYING SITUATION
LET US RETURN.

SORRY ABOUT THAT.
TEE HEE HEE!
I KNEW YOU'D DO SOME-THING...
BUT YOU'RE A BIT LATE.
THEY SHOT HER WITH A HAND-GUN.
SOME-HOW, THE WOUND'S GONE, BUT--
I-I'M FINE-- REALLY!
WE SHOULD TAKE YOU TO THE HOSPITAL, JUST IN CASE.
I WILL MAKE THE AR-RANGE-MENTS.
I-I WASN'T SCARED AT ALL!
PLEASE.
SENPAI !!
!
SEVENTY METERS BEHIND YOU!
THERE'S THREE OF THEM!!
BYUN
NUMBER 12...
OPER-ATION 3-6!
PACHI
GASHAK

TH-
DWOON!
WHOA ...!
!!!
BACHI
NUMBER 21.
EEK!
?!!
SHYOOM
IT'S JUST LIKE THE REPORTS SAID. YOU CAN USE THE ARMS EVEN WHEN THEY'RE INVISIBLE, CAN'T YOU?
BEHIND ME! BOTH OF YOU!
?!?
KRRRSH!


SHUUU...

I REMEMBER NOW...
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO GOT IN MY WAY BEFORE, AREN'T YOU?
ON THE DAY OF THAT TYPHOON...

WHAT ARE YOU?
HOW IS IT THAT YOU CAN SUMMON SO MANY DIFFERENT PLAYING CARDS?
A NORMAL DREAMER SHOULD HAVE ONLY ONE CARD.

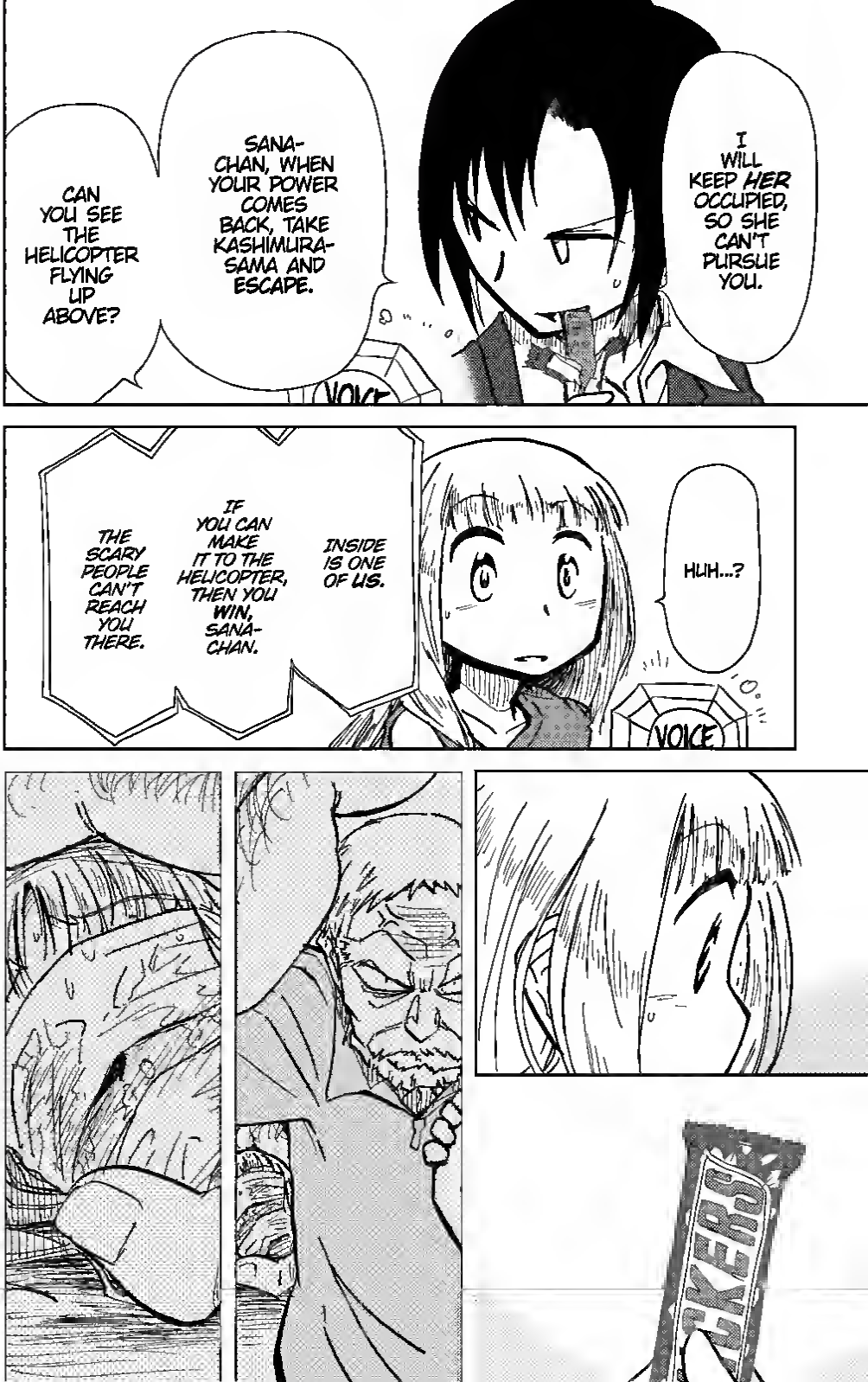
WHO KNOWS.
COULD THIS ONE REALLY SUMMON SO MANY CARDS?
OR IS THERE A TEAM BEHIND THIS?
A KEYWORD THAT CONTROLS THEM ALL IN A SYSTEM?
OR--IT COULDN'T BE...
THERE'S ANOTHER "RED QUEEN"?
MMM...
WHY--?
WHY, GOD? WHY ALL OF THIS? WHY ME?
ZORUU
I WILL END THIS QUICKLY.
PACHI
I'M SORRY... MY DEAR.

GYUUN
LEND ME YOUR STRENGTH.
!!!
NUMBER 21!
GASHA
!
ZU-ズ ZUN ズ
BACHI
A NORMAL HUMAN, EVEN OF THE CALIBER OF THE SPECIAL ASSAULT TEAM, WOULD HAVE BEEN DESTROYED.
ARE YOU A MACHINE OR SOME-THING?
KPA-PA KPA-PA

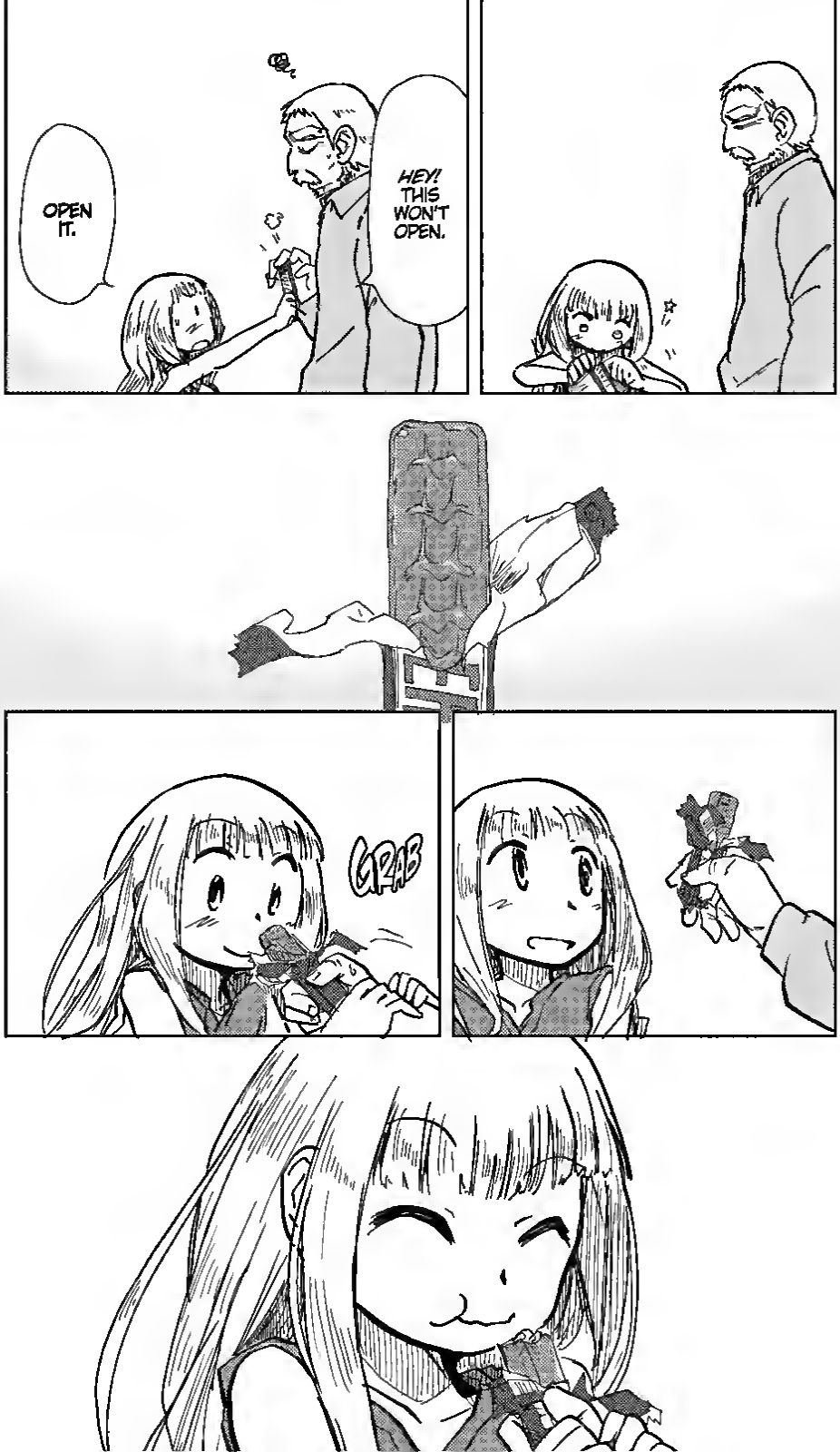
GASHA
NUMBER 576...
AUTHORIZE OPERATION 2-4.
KASHA
JYA-KI
I SEE-- YOU AREN'T REALLY TRYING YET?
FWOOOO
GAAN
NUMBER 380 THROUGH 392...
AUTHORIZE OPERATION 2-4.
VOLLEY!
GASHA
GASHA
GASHA
WOBBLE
PWAN
PACH!

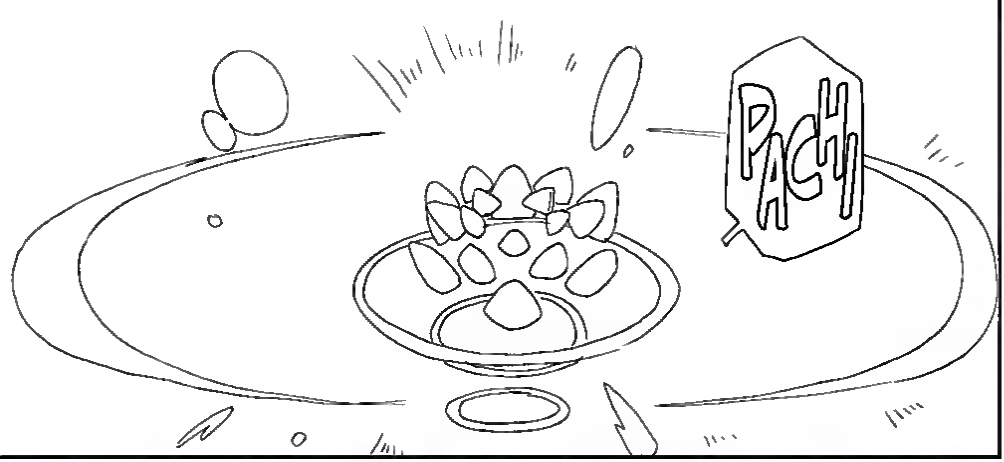
BATA
BATA
BATA
BATA
BATA
DON'T LET THE HELICOPTER COME ANY CLOSER. WAIT UP ABOVE.
BRAT-TAT-TAT-TAT
TA-TA-TAN
TA-TA-TAN
YES, SENPAI?
!!
YAMADA.
TH-THOOM
OH...OH NO. NO, NO, NO, NO!
GR-RO-OOOO
I WOULD EXPECT NO LESS... AFTER ALL, SHE WAS ABLE TO SUBDUE SANA-CHAN ON HER OWN.
SHE'S UNBELIEVABLE, THIS WOMAN.
GASHA
HYUN
YOU'LL BE SHOT DOWN.
I'LL GO IN WHEN THE "RHINOCEROS BEETLE" PAUSES.
THEN I CAN'T GET TO YOU GUYS.
B-BUT...
KI
BATA-TA-TA
BATA-TA-TA
BATA-TA-TA
KA-WOOM
THUUUN
KRACK
KA-KLANG
!!
SEN-PAI --!!
BACHI
.....

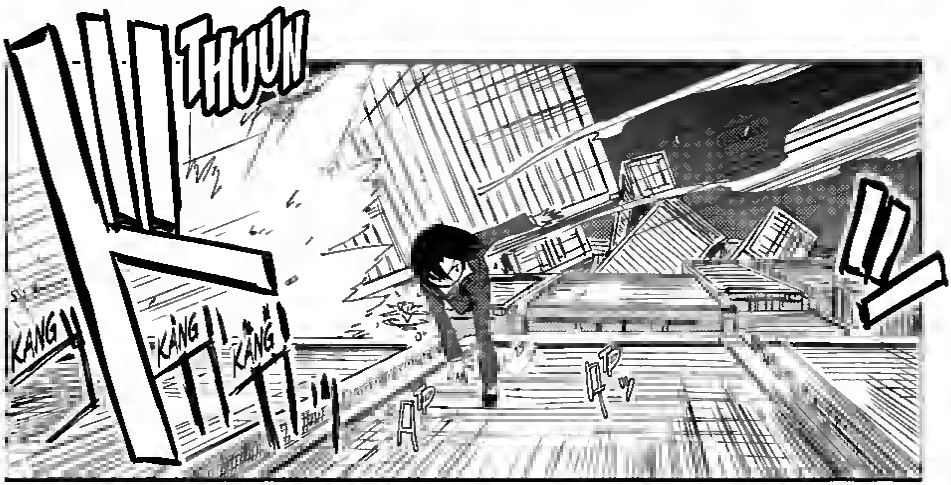
SANA-CHAN.
?
HUH?
CAN YOU HEAR ME? THIS IS ICHI-JYOU.
!
KIIN
VOICE
PSHUUU
NOW.
NUMBER 66.
VOICE
GASHA
!
TCHUUP
I BROUGHT IT HERE FOR YOU.
PLEASE, USE IT TO REPLE-NISH YOUR ENERGY.
WHAT... WHAT IS THIS?
IT'S CANDY.
IT IS VERY, VERY SWEET, SO PLEASE-- EAT IT SLOWLY.
THERE IS WATER, TOO.
VOICE
VOICE


I WILL KEEP HER OCCUPIED, SO SHE CAN'T PURSUE YOU.
SANA-CHAN, WHEN YOUR POWER COMES BACK, TAKE KASHIMURA-SAMA AND ESCAPE.
CAN YOU SEE THE HELICOPTER FLYING UP ABOVE?
VOICE
HUH...?
INSIDE IS ONE OF US.
IF YOU CAN MAKE IT TO THE HELICOPTER, THEN YOU WIN, SANA-CHAN.
THE SCARY PEOPLE CAN'T REACH YOU THERE.
VOICE

OKAY.
GOT IT.
HEY...
ZOROKU.
EVERY-THING'S OKAY.
ZOROKU, YOU TOLD ME EVERY-THING'S GOING TO BE OKAY.
AND EVERY-THING'S OKAY NOW.
IS THAT SO?
ARE YOU--?
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.
THIS TIME, I'M GOING TO SAVE YOU, ZOROKU.


OPEN IT.
HEY! THIS WON'T OPEN.
GRAB


PACH!


THUUN
KANG
KANG
KANG

KPRSH
!!
GATA-TAT-TAT-TAT-TAT!!
TWNK
TWP.
TWP
PACH
FIRE --!
JYAK!
NUMBER 380!!
GASHA

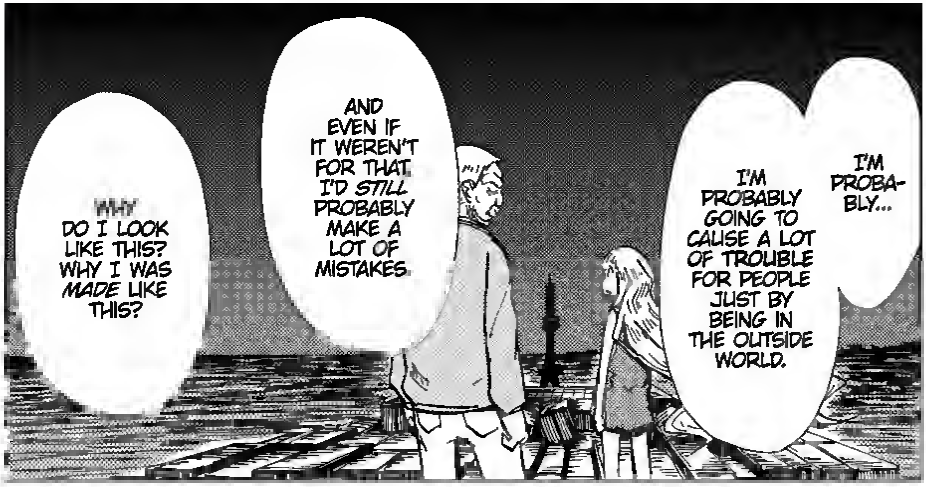
SA-SLASH
NUMBER 106!!
!!
PACH!
RUU
HMMM. SHE CAN CONTROL THE INVISIBLE ARMS IN SPITE OF THE DISTANCE.
YAMADA'S DEVICE IS STILL IM--
!!
THA-THUN
ZA-ZUUN
!!
OH NO, NO, NOOO!
SENPAI!!

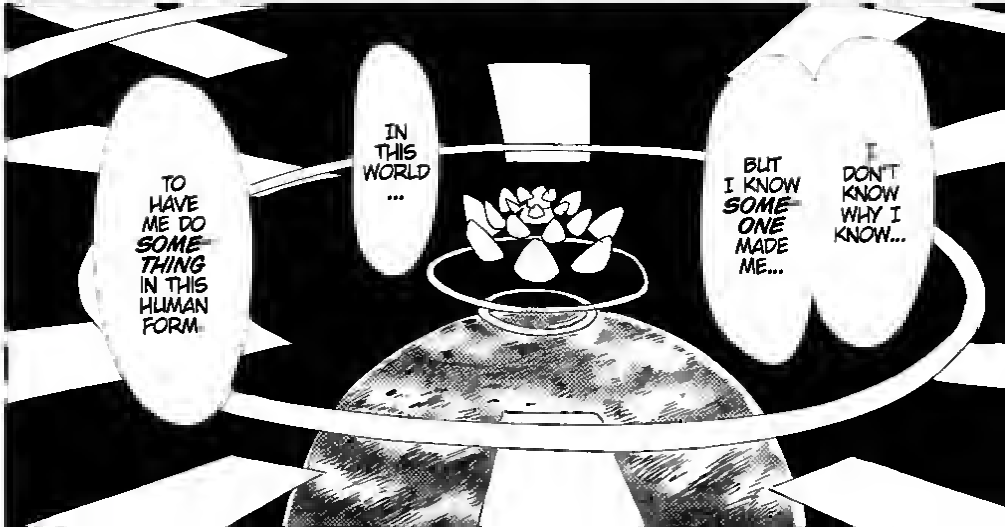
GRM GRM GRM GRM GRM
JA-CHAK
GRAB
NAH--!
SLAM
STAGGER
SLUMP
NNGH ...!
THIS IS WHY I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T WANT THINGS TO GET SERIOUS.
PLEASE! ENOUGH ALREADY!
NUM-BER 1!!
GASHA
BANG
PASHU
BANG

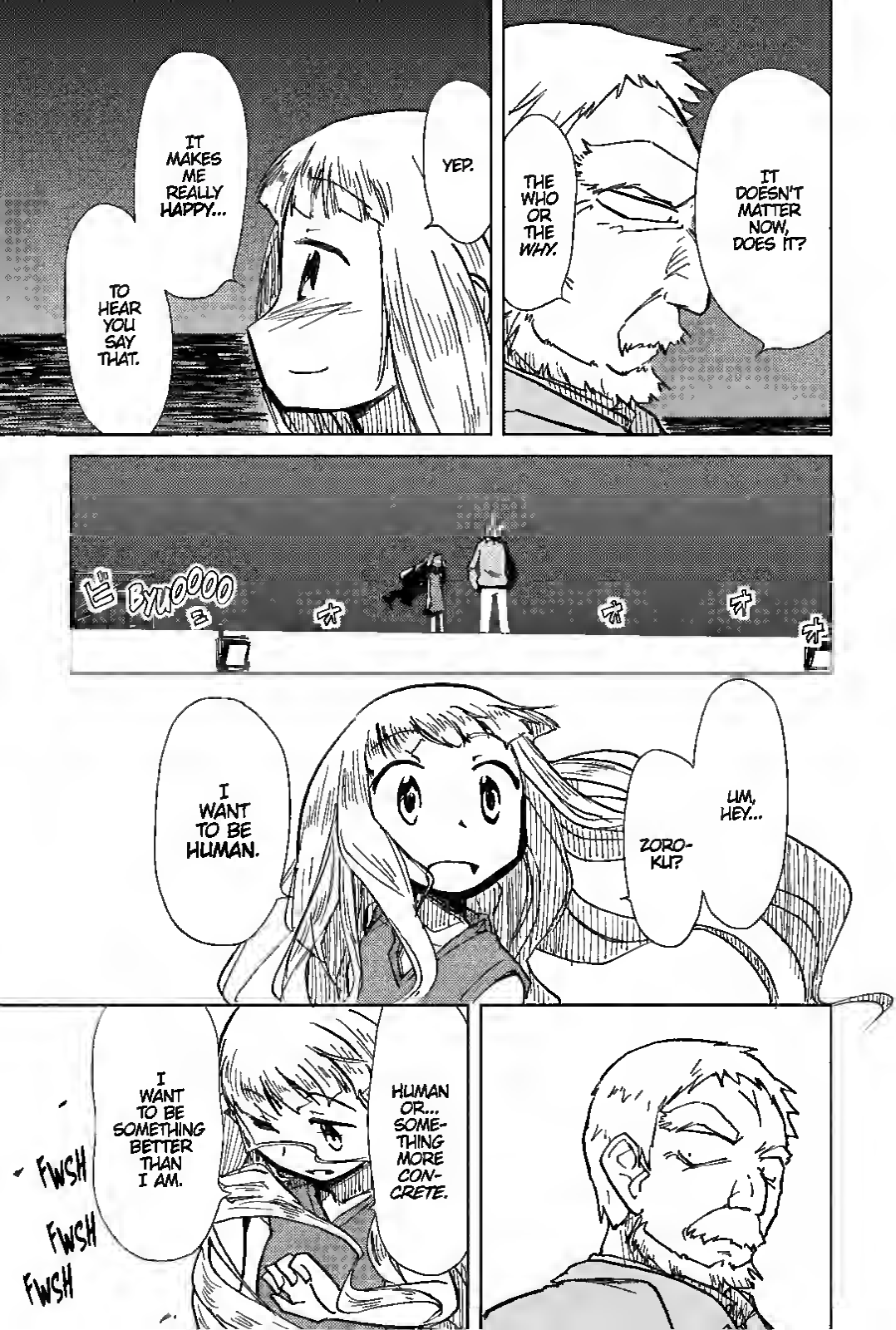
PA
PA
PA
CALM DOWN! CONCEN-TRATE, CONCEN-TRATE, CONCEN-TRATE ...!!
TKK TKK
SHE'S... UMM...
?!
!!
FOUND IT!!
AT THREE O'CLOCK! THE SEVENTH ROW OF CONTAIN-ERS!
I'M A SUCH GENIUS !!
HAH!
!!
SAA!
NUMBER 3!!
NUM-BER 2!
GACHI
NRGH --!
PACHI
PACHI

GRMM
I DISLIKE THESE SINGLE DIGIT MANEUVERS...
AS I CANNOT HOLD BACK.
SO MANY DIFFERENT KINDS...
AGAIN!
<WHAT ARE...
<YOU?!!>
GA-
SHUUN
FUHOOO...
HEY, ZORO-KU...
WHAT?
UM, YOU KNOW...

I... I'M INHUMAN, THEY SAID.
THEY SAID I'M A MON-STER.
YEAH.
AND, UMM, YOU KNOW...
.....

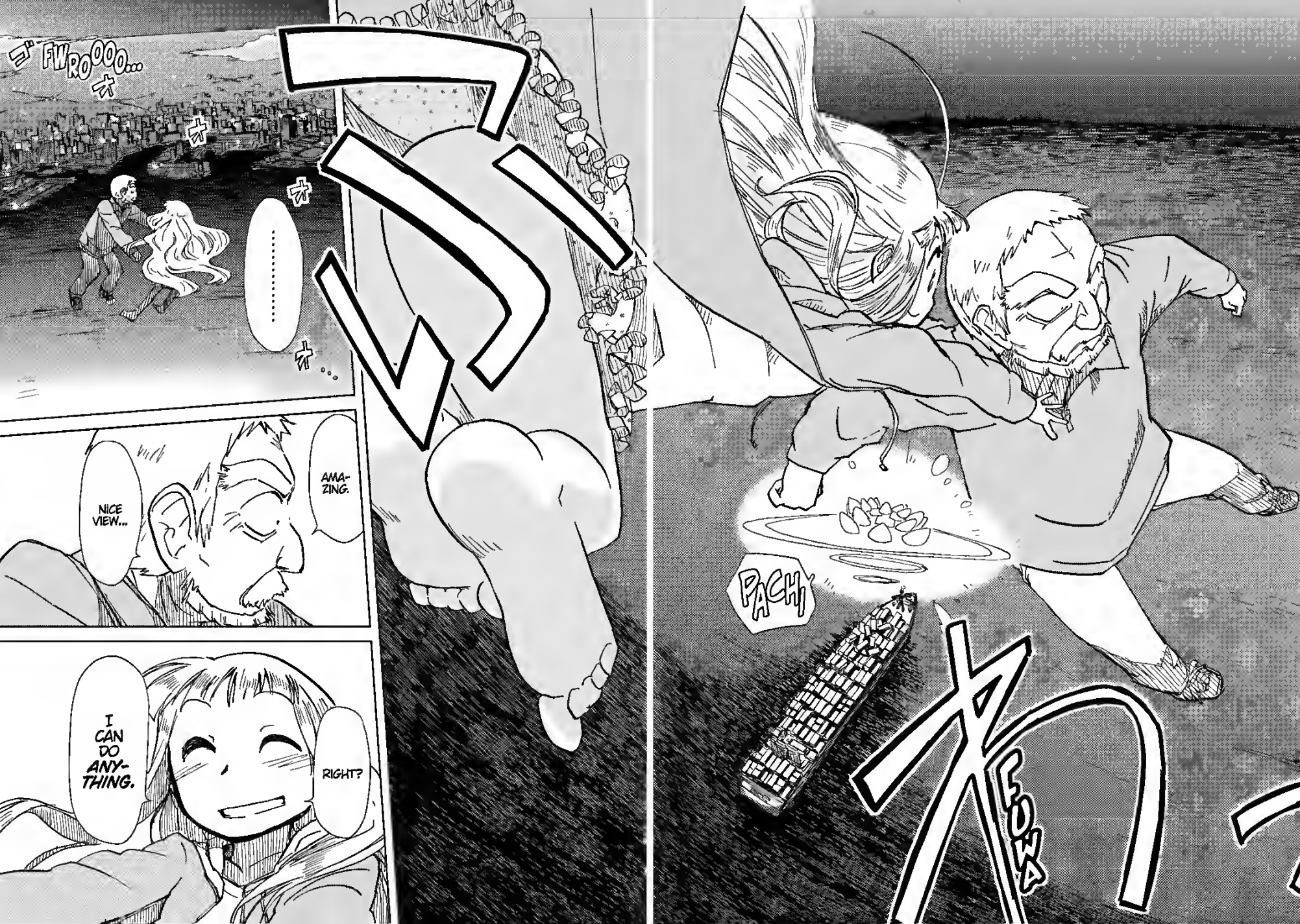

I'M PROBA-BLY...
I'M PROBABLY GOING TO CAUSE A LOT OF TROUBLE FOR PEOPLE JUST BY BEING IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD.
AND EVEN IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT, I'D STILL PROBABLY MAKE A LOT OF MISTAKES.
WHY DO I LOOK LIKE THIS? WHY I WAS MADE LIKE THIS?


I DON'T KNOW WHY I KNOW...
BUT I KNOW SOME ONE MADE ME...
IN THIS WORLD ...
TO HAVE ME DO SOME THING IN THIS HUMAN FORM.


IT MAKES ME REALLY HAPPY...
TO HEAR YOU SAY THAT.
YEP.
IT DOESN'T MATTER NOW, DOES IT?
THE WHO OR THE WHY.
ビュオオオ Byuoooo
UM, HEY...
ZORO-KU?
I WANT TO BE HUMAN.
HUMAN OR... SOME-THING MORE CON-CRETE.
I WANT TO BE SOMETHING BETTER THAN I AM.
FWSH
FWSH
FWSH

I HAVE SO MUCH TO LEARN.
I CAN'T REALLY SAY IT WELL, BUT...
I WANT TO KNOW EVERY-THING...
ABOUT THE WORLD AND...
ABOUT HUMANS.
I WANT TO KNOW ABOUT YOU, ZORO-KU--AND SANAE.
I WANT TO FIND OUT WHERE THE END OF THE WORLD IS.
I WANT TO EAT A LOT OF YUMMY THINGS.
THAT--AND I JUST...I JUST WANT TO BECOME SOMETHING BETTER.
SOMEDAY... I WANT TO KNOW HOW I WAS MADE AND WHY I'M NOT HUMAN...
GRR
I WANT TO FIND...
I'M HUN-GRY!
ROOOOWWL
YOU'LL FIND IT ALL OUT IN DUE TIME.

YEP.
PACHI
MY HAIR...
I CAN DO IT MY-SELF...
BUT I WANT SANAE TO DO IT.
PUSH
FUWAA
THEN ASK HER WHEN WE GET HOME.
OKAY!


ゴ FWROOOO...
オ
オ
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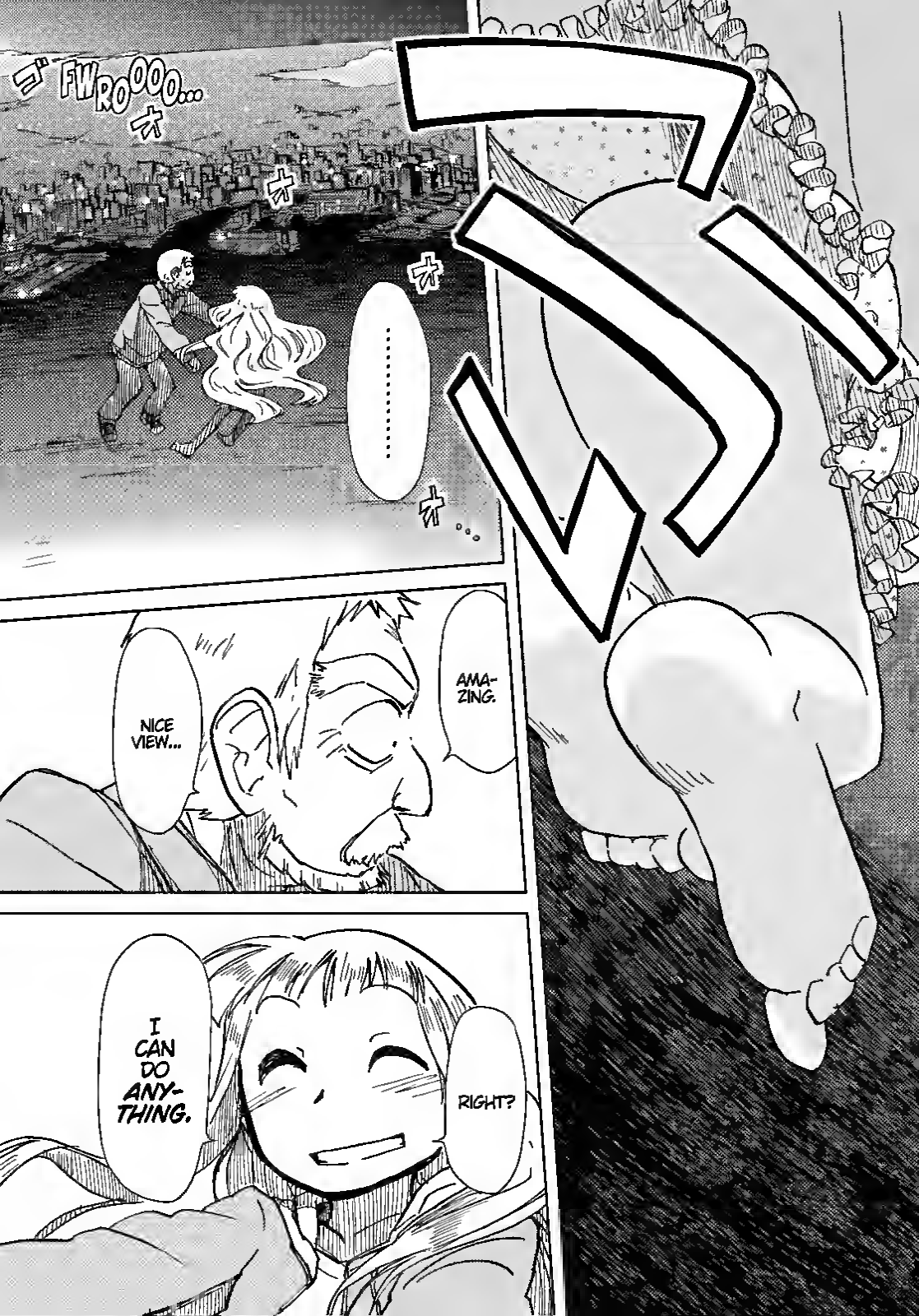
.....
オ...
NICE VIEW...
AMA-ZING.
I CAN DO ANY-THING.
RIGHT?
PACH
FUWA

PACHI
FUWA


ゴ FWROOOO...
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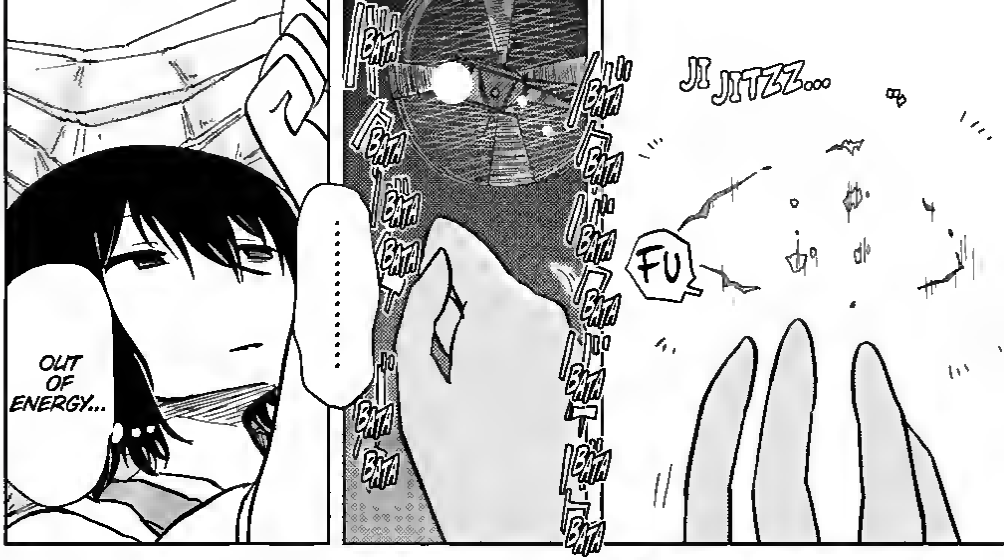
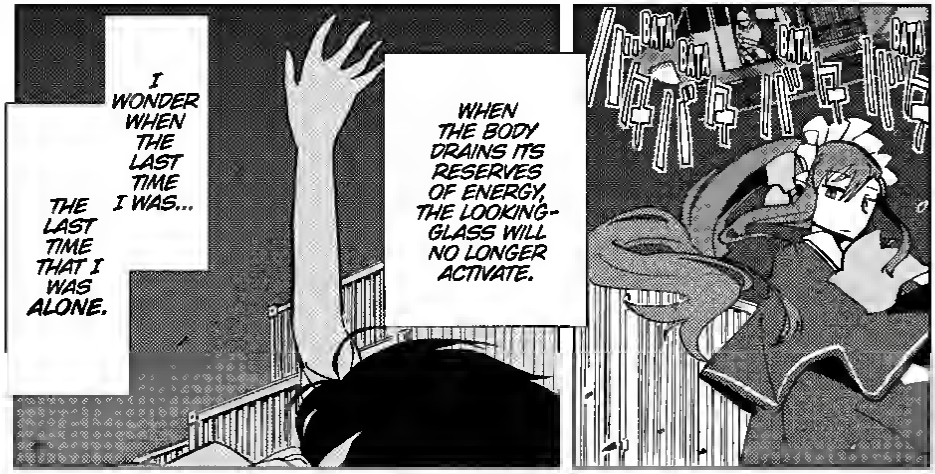
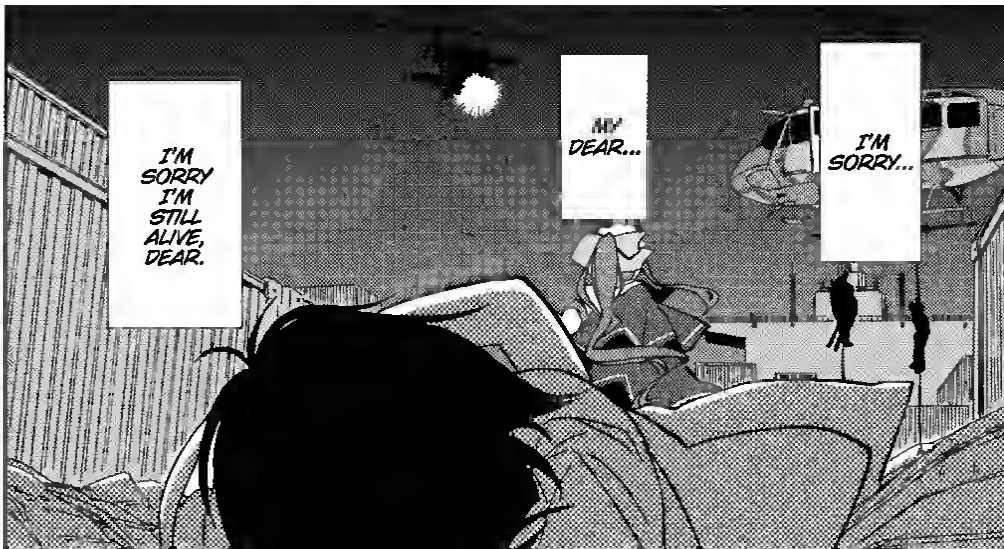
.....
AMA-ZING.
NICE VIEW...
I CAN DO ANY-THING.
RIGHT?

!
BATA BATA BATA BATA BATA
FOLLOW THEM!!
FOLLOW THEM!
WHERE ARE YOU FLYING OFF TO?!
HUH...? WAIT...!
?!!
BATA BATA BATA
ゴGROOOO
HMPH.
YOU ARE UNDER ARREST ON SUSPICION OF ABDUCTION, ASSAULT, AND BODILY INJURY OF A MINOR.
FORMER CAPTAIN MINNIE C. TACHIBANA.

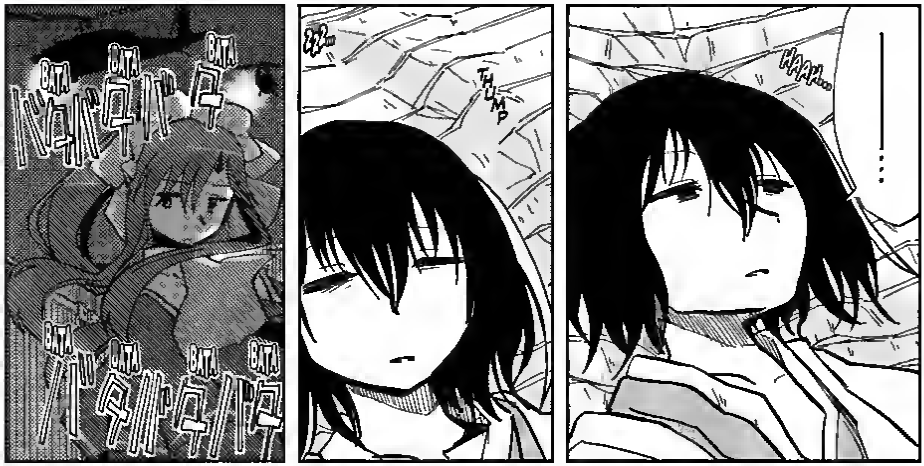
BATA-
BATA-
BATA-
BATA
I LEFT THE TV ON LATE AND FELL ASLEEP. WHEN I WOKE UP, THIS HAD APPEARED.
IT SEEMS THAT SIX-HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SIX WEAPONS AND THIRTEEN MAGICAL ITEMS ARE STORED IN HERE.
IT SEEMS THAT THIS IS A MAGICAL STORE-HOUSE--THE KIND THAT APPEARS IN ANIME.
ONE THAT THE MAID CHARAC-TER USES...
KLNK
THIS...
BATA-
BATA-
BATA-
BATA
THIS...
IT DOESN'T SEEM TO GRANT OUR WISHES.
BECAUSE OF ALL THIS, MY LIFE IS OUT OF CONTROL.
I'M A HUMAN WEAPON. IT'S CRAZY, ISN'T IT?
GRO
.....
JI JTZZ
PLEASE GIVE UP.


OUT OF ENERGY...
.....
BATA
JI JITZZ...
FU

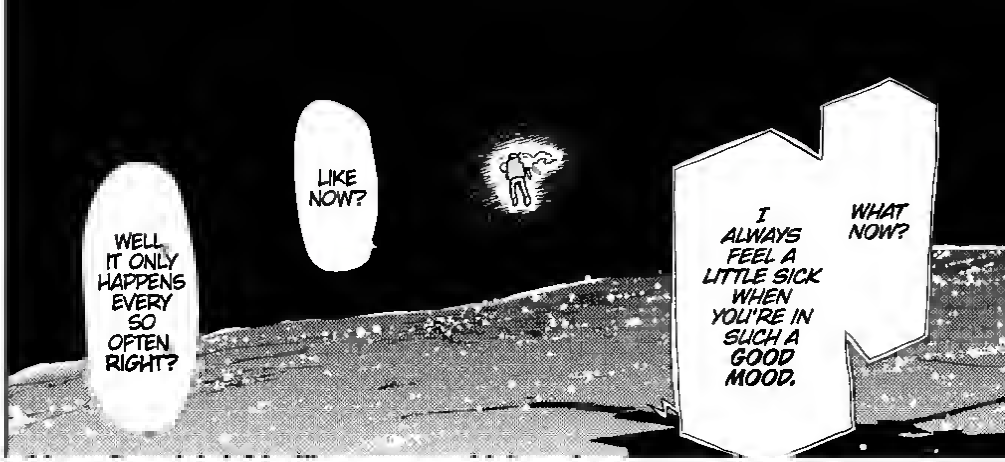

I WONDER WHEN THE LAST TIME I WAS...
THE LAST TIME THAT I WAS ALONE.
WHEN THE BODY DRAINS ITS RESERVES OF ENERGY, THE LOOKING-GLASS WILL NO LONGER ACTIVATE.
BATA

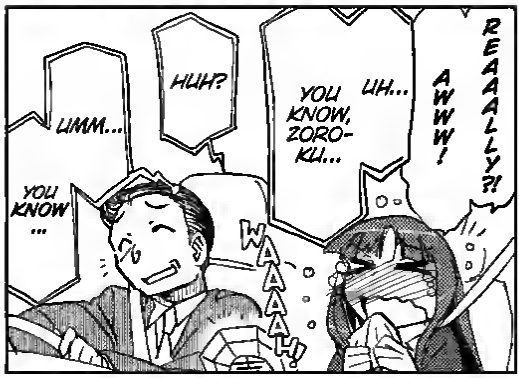

I'M SORRY I'M STILL ALIVE, DEAR.
MY DEAR...
I'M SORRY...

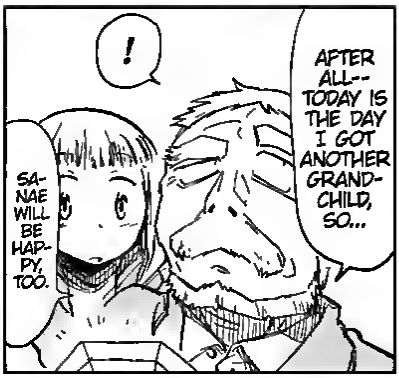
I'M... I'M SLEEPY.
MY MIND ISN'T WORKING THE WAY IT USED TO...
BUT EVEN SO, I COULDN'T STOP.
I REALIZED LONG AGO THAT MY FATE HAD BEEN TWISTED SOMEHOW.
B.T.A.

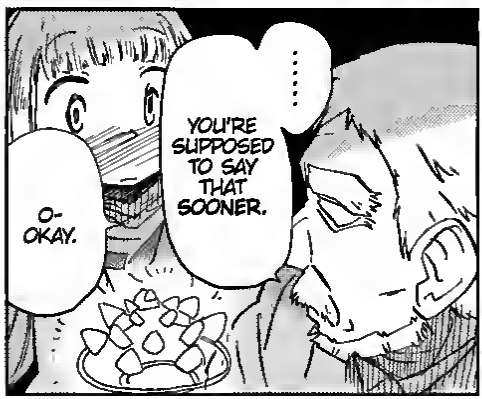

BATA
BATA
BATA

I LOOKED INTO THIS EARLIER, BUT THERE'S NOW CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT THEY WERE EXPERIMENTING ON HUMANS WITHOUT OFFICIAL APPROVAL.
IT'S THE ONLY PLACE IN THE COUNTRY TO WORK WITH ALICE'S DREAMERS, YOU KNOW.
THINGS SHOULD GET A LITTLE BETTER FROM NOW ON.
YOU'LL HAVE YOUR HANDS FULL FOR A WHILE, OLD MAN, BUT, WELL-- JUST DO WHAT YOU CAN.
HRUMPH!
VOICE
WHERE ARE YOU RIGHT NOW, OLD MAN?
DON'T KNOW.
ON TOP OF THE SKY.
WELL, THAT'S ALL RIGHT. DON'T CALL TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO YOURSELF AND GET PICTURES TAKEN OR SOMETHING.
THAT WOULD JUST MAKE MORE WORK FOR ME, YOU KNOW.
LISTEN TO WHAT HE SAYS, SANA.
NH...
UH, MNH!
BUT, UM, YOU'VE GOT IT WRONG. IT WASN'T ON PURPOSE!
VOICE
WELL, IT SHOULD BE OKAY EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, RIGHT?
!
YOU DON'T OFTEN GET THE CHANCE TO FLY IN THE AIR.


WHAT NOW?
I ALWAYS FEEL A LITTLE SICK WHEN YOU'RE IN SUCH A GOOD MOOD.
LIKE NOW?
WELL IT ONLY HAPPENS EVERY SO OFTEN RIGHT?


REAAALLY?!
AWW!
UH...
YOU KNOW, ZORO-KU...
HUH?
UMM...
YOU KNOW...
WAAAAH!


!
AFTER ALL-- TODAY IS THE DAY I GOT ANOTHER GRAND-CHILD, SO...
SA-NAE WILL BE HAP-PY, TOO.

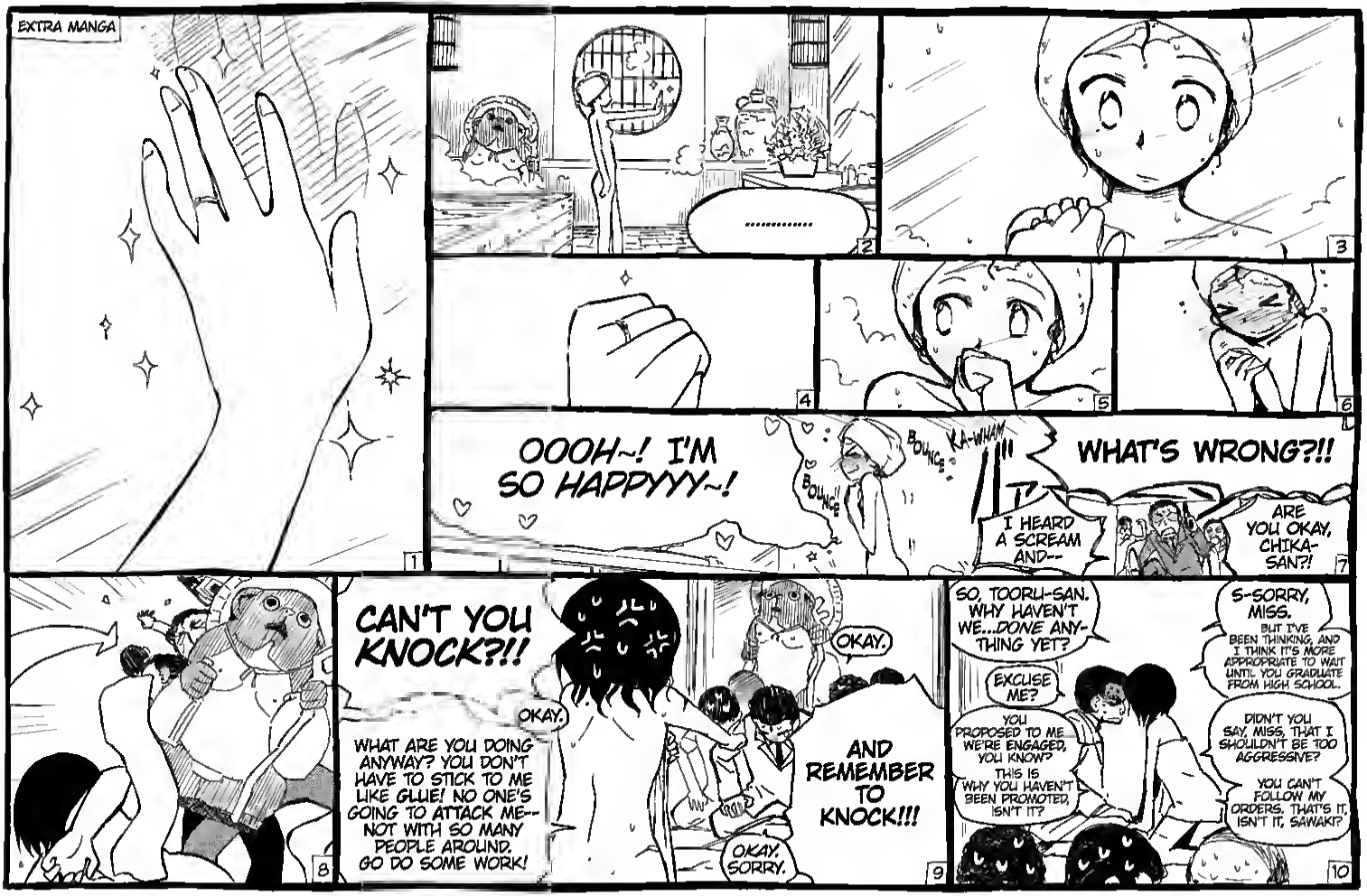

O-OKAY.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SAY THAT SOONER.
.....

I'M SORRY ABOUT DROPPING THE VASES EARLIER.

OKAY.

SHOULD WE GO HOME?

To be continued.....


EXTRA MANGA
1
.....
2
3
4
5
6
OOOH~! I'M SO HAPPYYY~!
BOUNCE
BOUNCE
KA-WHAM!!!
WHAT'S WRONG?!!
I HEARD A SCREAM AND--
ARE YOU OKAY, CHIKA-SAN?!
7
CAN'T YOU KNOCK?!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ANYWAY? YOU DON'T HAVE TO STICK TO ME LIKE GLUE! NO ONE'S GOING TO ATTACK ME-- NOT WITH SO MANY PEOPLE AROUND. GO DO SOME WORK!
8
OKAY.
OKAY.
OKAY. SORRY.
AND REMEMBER TO KNOCK!!!
9
SO, TOORU-SAN. WHY HAVEN'T WE...DONE ANY-THING YET?
EXCUSE ME?
YOU PROPOSED TO ME. WE'RE ENGAGED, YOU KNOW?
THIS IS WHY YOU HAVEN'T BEEN PROMOTED, ISN'T IT?
S-SORRY, MISS.
BUT I'VE BEEN THINKING, AND I THINK IT'S MORE APPROPRIATE TO WAIT UNTIL YOU GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL.
DIDN'T YOU SAY, MISS, THAT I SHOULDN'T BE TOO AGGRESSIVE?
YOU CAN'T FOLLOW MY ORDERS. THAT'S IT, ISN'T IT, SAWAKI?
10

Alice & Zoroku

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

Alice & Zoroku

story and art by **TETSUYA IMAI**

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TRANSLATION
Beni Axia Conrad

ADAPTATION
Maggie Cooper

LETTERING
Ludwig Sacramento

COVER DESIGN
Nicky Lim

PROOFREADER
Janet Houck

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Jenn Grunigen

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT
CK Russell

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Lissa Pattillo

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Adam Arnold

PUBLISHER
Jason DeAngelis

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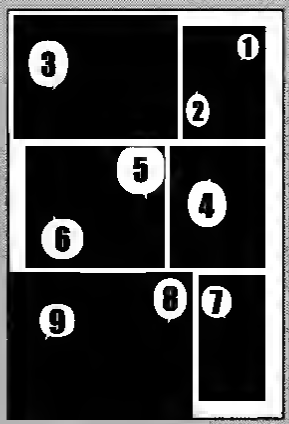
READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



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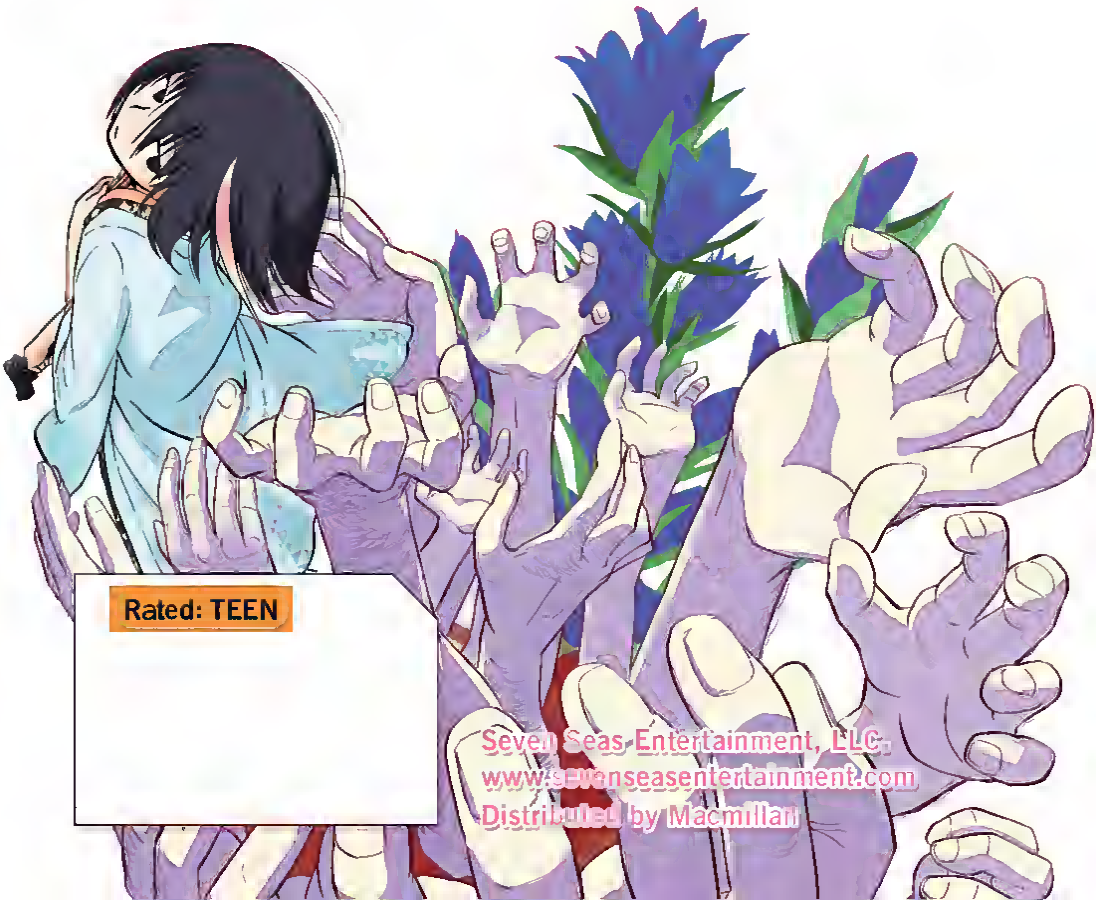
When the Going Gets Tough

Sana may have psychic powers, but she has a *lot* to learn about everyday reality! Luckily, she's got a stubborn old man named Zoroku at her side to help her figure out right from wrong. Life's still hard, though—and the appearance of Minnie C, a woman with amazing powers, has Sana backed into a corner. Trapped in a web of ruthless government organizations, it's getting harder and harder for Sana and Zoroku to know just which path to take.



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